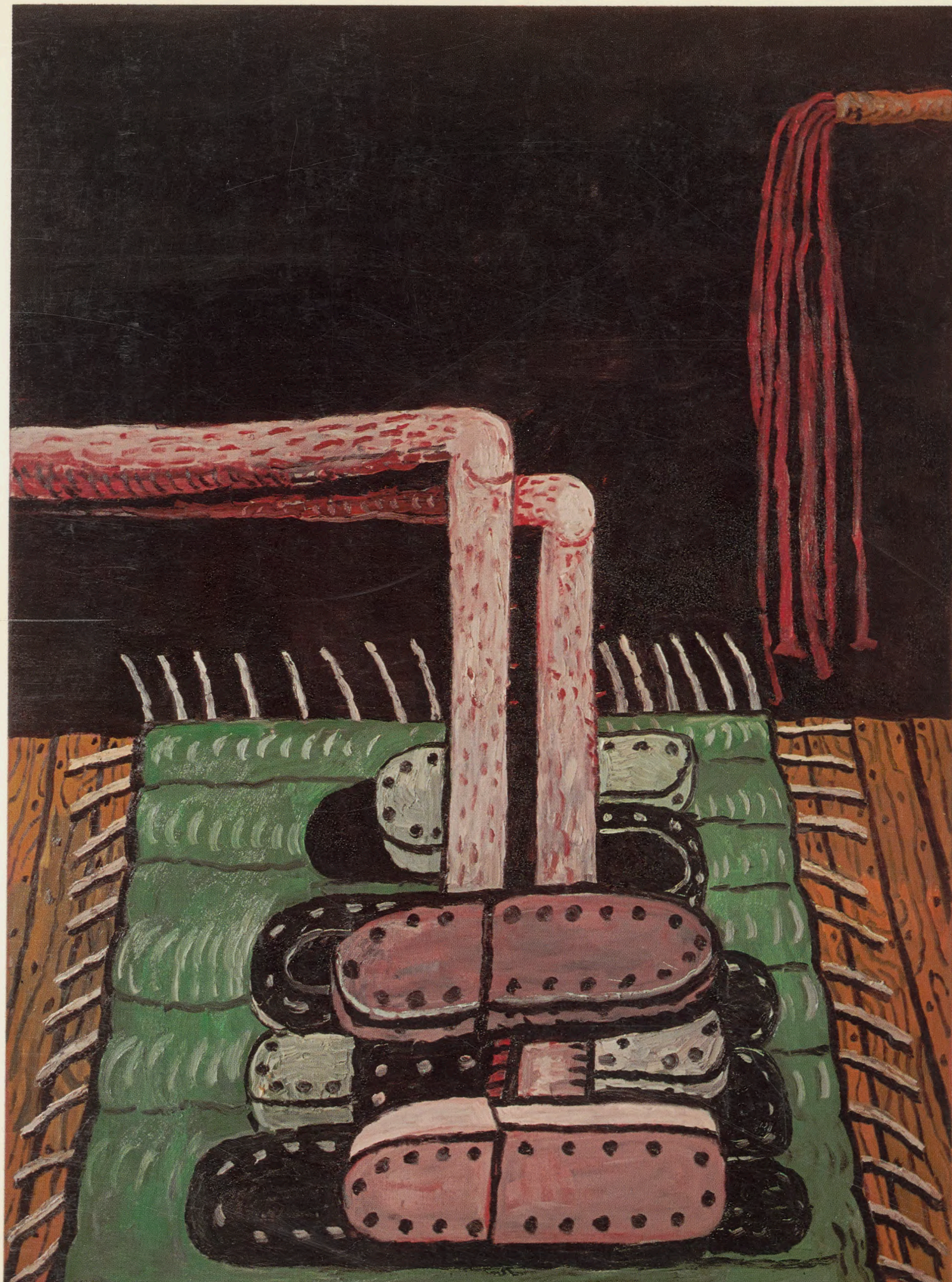
PHILIP GUSTON



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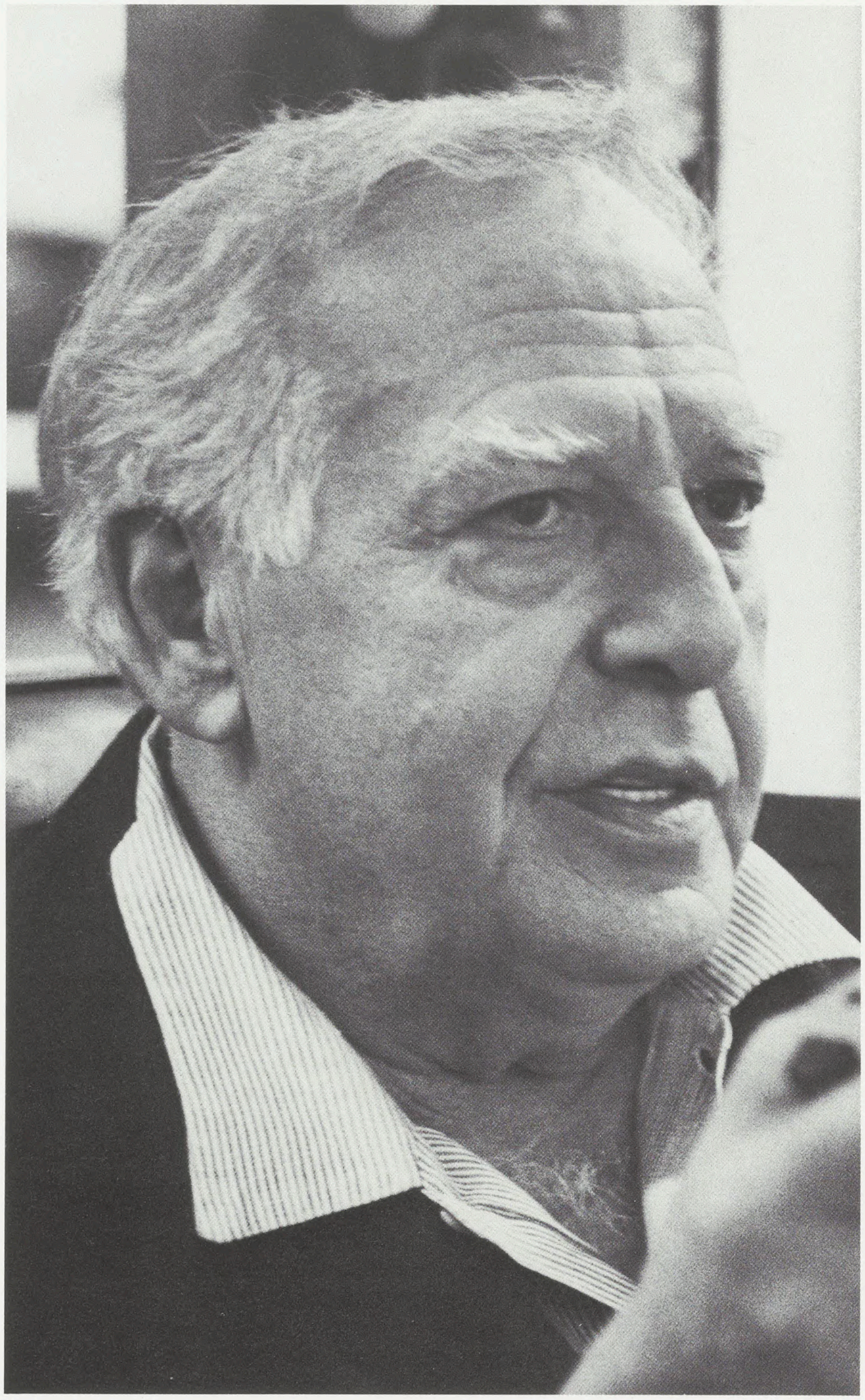

Philip Guston, 1980
Photo: Sidney Felsen

PHILIP GUSTON

George Braziller, Inc., New York
in association with the
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

This publication was prepared in conjunction with the exhibition, *Philip Guston*, organized by Henry T. Hopkins for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition and accompanying publication have been made possible through the generous support of SCM Corporation and the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., a Federal agency. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is supported in part by a grant from the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

DATES OF THE EXHIBITION

SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
May 16–June 29, 1980

CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.
July 20–September 9, 1980

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, CHICAGO
November 12, 1980–January 11, 1981

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the great pleasures of art museum life is to be able to develop exhibitions such as *Philip Guston*. The time and energy expended is nothing compared to the reward of working with the many people and institutions involved in bringing this project to fruition. The closer contact with Guston, alone, was a vitalizing and enriching experience. He and Musa, his wife of forty-three years, were supportive and helpful through every phase including selection, documentation, and communication. I am especially grateful to them for the warmth and hospitality shown to me in their home in Woodstock, New York.

David and Renee McKee, Guston's gallery representatives, were exemplary throughout the total project. Their passionate involvement and intuitive understanding of the work proved to be invaluable during our many visits to Guston's studio and through the selection process. They also provided substantial assistance with research problems and found answers to our many questions.

This catalog will be, we hope, a meaningful addition to the excellent Guston material already available. Since Dore Ashton, H. H. Arnason, Harold Rosenberg, and others, have placed Guston in history, I am particularly pleased to include Ross Feld's extended essay of personal response to and appreciation of the work itself. Steven Sloman, an artist in his own right, provided the many new photographs which appear in this publication. George Braziller and his associate, Letitia Burns O'Connor, have designed and printed the catalog up to "Braziller" standards even in the face of dramatically rising costs of paper and production.

As we had hoped, Guston collectors are also Guston lovers, interested in his continued well-being and only the softest nudging was necessary to get them to lend increasingly valuable paintings and drawings for such a lengthy museum tour. It is not possible to say how much their generosity is appreciated.

My appreciation is extended not only to the Board of Trustees of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, but to the Trustees, Directors, and staffs of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The Denver Art Museum; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, where the exhibition will be presented.

Within all art museums, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the development and presentation of any exhibition requires a full staff effort. Karen Tsujimoto, Assistant Curator, supported by Louise Katzman, Curatorial Assistant; Eugenie Candau, Librarian; Nona Ghent, Assistant to the Director; Katherine Church Holland, Research Director; and Robin Bryant, Curatorial Secretary, did the real work of overseeing preparation of catalog material, and getting the exhibition ready for installation by Gallery Supervisor Julius Wasserstein and his team. Robert Whyte and Diane Frankel of the Education Department initiated the educational components of the exhibition. Registration duties were carried out by Debra Neese, Assistant Registrar. John Guard has overseen in-house graphic needs, and D.B. Finnegan has expertly handled the initial local and national publicity.

Michael McCone and S. C. St. John secured and managed the funds necessary to bring the project to completion. For this funding support we especially appreciate the help of SCM Corporation which has continued to bring leadership to the field of corporate funding for the visual arts. We also wish to thank the staff of the Museum Program at the National Endowment for the Arts for their support of this exhibition. All exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art are supported in part by the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

HENRY T. HOPKINS
Director
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

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SPONSOR'S FOREWORD

Philip Guston holds a unique position in American art. His early figurative work, followed by his abstract painting, rank him with Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell, and Willem de Kooning. But it is the use of figurative images in his most recent work that places him in a special category as an artist who has maintained the quality of his painting over four decades even as his career has moved through three distinct phases.

SCM Corporation is pleased to assist the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in this first retrospective of Guston's work in nearly twenty years. This exhibition reveals the man, as well as the artist, and it is invigorating to experience the vitality engendered by a continuing quest for new visions and new answers. Guston is an artist whose search to learn more about his life and his art sets a standard that each of us would do well to emulate no matter what our pursuits.

PAUL H. ELICKER
President
SCM Corporation

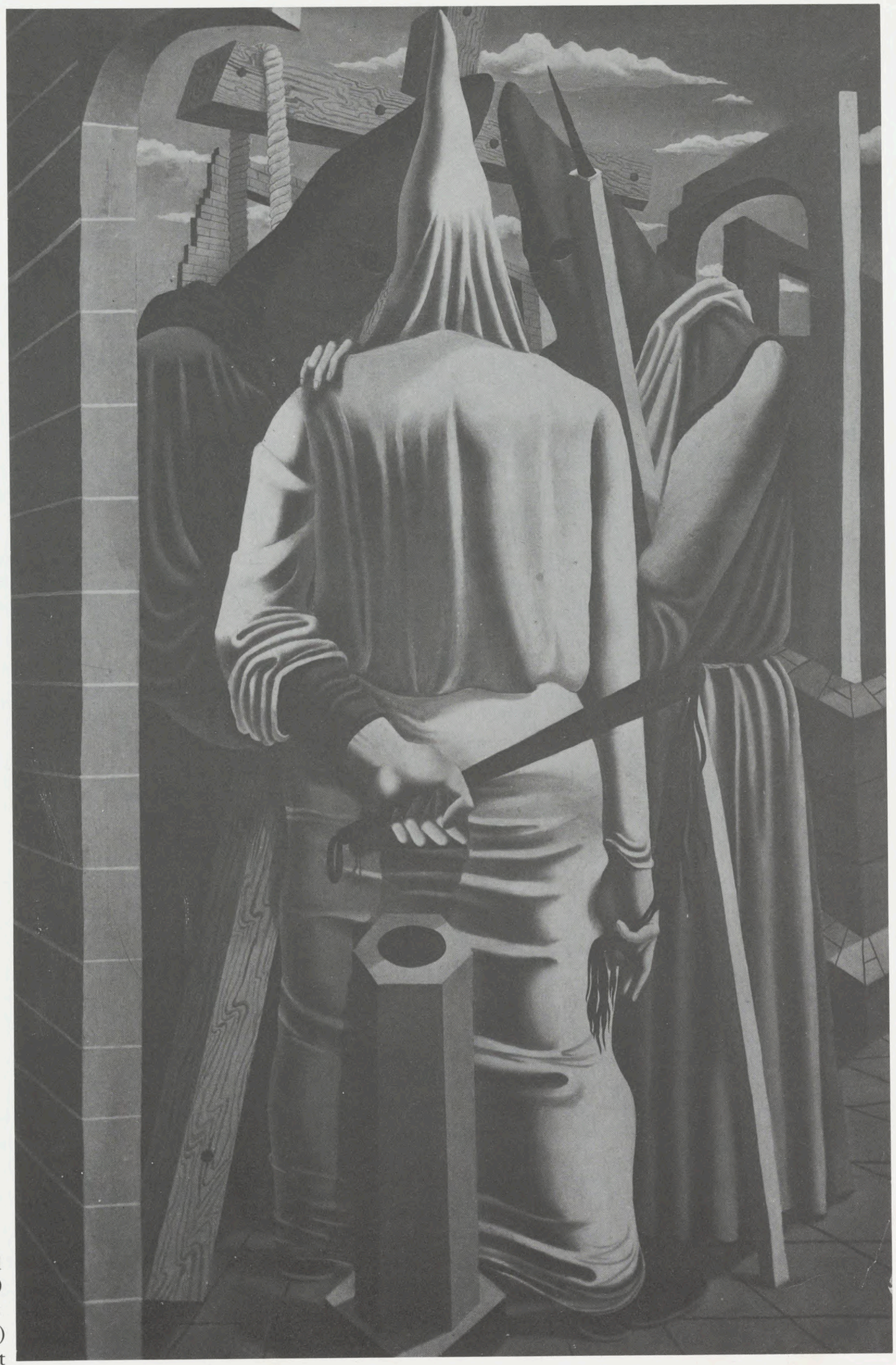


Fig. 1
CONSPIRATORS, 1930
Oil on canvas
50 x 36″ (127.1 x 91.4 cm.)
Painting lost

PHILIP GUSTON

An Essay by Ross Feld

Thinking is arduous. Rethinking is even harder. And most frustrating of all, a constant, subversive shuttle seems to operate between the two. Cut into calendar time are the marks made by a certain kind of troublemaker who insists on stepping forward periodically to remind us of just this; each time we're satisfied that we've succeeded in containing thought—keeping rethought out, stopping the ping-ponging once and for all — these troublemakers appear, and pluck the cork.

I look at a painting. If my eye is blithe and well-tempered, I can take real pleasure in skipping it over the various surfaces and concentrations, letting it be seduced by a color here, deflected by a tension there. When appropriate, I've decided already what it is I'm seeing. Thirteen men at a long table, all of them looking very anxious but One. The delectable back of a face-turned-away woman, so thick and smooth and faultless, she might have been sculpted out of a block of butter. A spiky horse, its mouth pried open by agony. If I can't immediately recognize what it is I'm seeing, my educated sympathies are called up, fall into place, and engage. I confront a rill of charismatic color or a single slash of brush or a shape or a plain stain: I *understand.* (And am flattered that I do; the mirror of art gleams brightest at this self-registering moment.) I am able to understand, because I already know what led to what, know all of the leading characters, and have some idea, finally, of the upshot.

I know about cave art and icons; I know about religious tableaux, and I know when the holiness drained out, leaving the vividness in street clothes. I know when vividness, later, turned completely naked, and fluttered as the sum of its parts. I know when it became *all* parts. I know all these things . . .

At which point these troublemakers show up, stamping onto the stage with taunts of *You do?* and *That's what you think!* Their entrance is untidy; they stagger under the weight of everything I know and more; their right and left hands fight with each other; they're bound up by crowded cross-purposes, the ravishing and the crude, and are in love with their own unease. They are either dignified to the point of spookiness—Augustine, Piero della Francesca, Baudelaire, Kierkegaard—or are masses of unpredictability — Rembrandt, Picasso, Beckett. And always, always, they totally break up the plot.

Philip Guston was born in Montreal in 1913. Odessa, birthplace of great Russian Jewish writers, musicians, and gangsters, was still strong upon the family — and Montreal offered cognate flavors. "Rotten, toylike, crazy and filthy, riddled, flogged with harsh weather," is how Saul Bellow, in *Herzog*, remembers the ghetto. Not all that much worse off than the wretchedly poor French-Canadians, the newly arrived Jews were free to ignore, partake of, or exploit the city's shaggy energy. On New York's Rivington Street, greenhorns were turning out coats; off Montreal's Sherbrooke Street, they were, perhaps, as naturally filling a meager purse by rumrunning.

Guston's parents were hardly less contradictory than their first port-of-call in North America. In Canada, Guston's father worked as a machinist, producing drive shafts for the Canadian National Railroad; but all the physicalness of his breadwinning never sweated away the part of him that was brooding, clogged, and doubt-racked. As often as Philip, the youngest of seven children, was enrolled in a *cheder* for religious instruction by his mother, he was yanked out by his father, whose agnosticism was

outraged. Guston's mother, pious, fertile and canny, wasn't the complete victim: she had her irascible and independent side, too. (To this day, Guston lacks a birth certificate, and family legend has it that he is the issue of a last-moment Odessa romance.)

In 1919, children and wife were sent ahead, West, to see what Los Angeles might provide. It didn't provide much, monetarily, but father soon joined family nonetheless, and there they stayed. Within five years, melancholy had descended so heavily into Guston's father that he became a suicide. Philip, presented with a correspondence course in cartooning, literally drew a distance for himself away from the family's shock and grief.

Guston attended Manual Arts high school in Los Angeles, and a fellow student, Jackson Pollock, became his fastest friend. After being expelled with Pollock for instigating a satirical broadside aimed at Manual Art's English department, Guston was now and then able to worm his way onto movie lots as an extra. In the 1931 version of the movie *Trilby*, starring John Barrymore, there is a young Guston in the background, in pasted-on beard and beret, playing an artist at work in an atelier.

Yet, despite the financial squeeze, Guston's and Pollock's cultural life was blessedly fat. Like many Californians before and since, what the two young men couldn't get firsthand or distrusted the transmission of, they ignored or simply made up. A catholicity was inevitable. Guston had begun a life-long study of the Italian Renaissance painting masters, but this didn't preclude as passionate an interest in "Krazy Kat." Krishnamurti and Dovchenko, Aimee Semple McPherson and Masaccio, de Chirico and Marx, a stint in the company of Reuben Kadish as an assistant muralist to Siqueiros in Mexico: the toning of Guston's intellectual and artistic spirit was both various and constant. The mix of California and the Depression allowed a certain base-level freedom. Guston was forced into no premature equilibrium. His act of becoming an artist was revved-up by that peculiar, unlikely free-will you see in someone who is jumping from pier to departing ship: acrobatic, intense, delicious. With leftist politics to stir him, and the Renaissance's examples as fortification, Guston was ready for New York.

Pollock had preceded him there by a few months. Both quickly joined the WPA's mural project—as had de Kooning, Gorky, Brooks, and so many others. Here, Guston's successes were signal. Like everyone else, he had his share of rejected cartoons, but the murals he did very soon met with attention and praise. The wall he executed for the WPA's own building at the New York World's Fair of 1939 was critically hailed, and one for a Queens housing project allowed the twenty-six-year-old painter a large open space—300 square feet—in which to block out, in confidence, a series of rapidly developing spatial notions.

What made wall work so felicitous for Guston? Muralists seem to work in the grip of a special knowledge both more and less practical than that of their easel-bound fellows. What they put down takes on architectural reality. Slothful technique won't do—bad weather or atmospheric grime will take their eventual toll. But, most seductive of all, the imagination is made somehow more durable in this state of freestandingness. All of these factors might easily have appealed to the breadth of young Guston's ambition. Public auspices encouraged bulk and typicalness, elements to which his visual and political sympathies could respond. The boy from Movieland may have also enjoyed the screen-like, narrative possibilities inherent in the form. And, not least of all, there's something vaguely foolish in the scope of murals. Guston affectionately remembers standing on a Brooklyn subway platform at rush hour, crowds

streaming about, while the WPA crew took measurements to realize the foreman's idea of completely decorating every wall of the New York subway system.

After the WPA, Guston returned primarily to easel work, first in Woodstock, New York, a bohemian hub in summer, but raw country the rest of the year; and then in the various studios of universities that began (and would continue, for the next thirty-seven years) to hire him. His first appointments were in the Midwest: Iowa, St. Louis, Minneapolis. He enjoyed teaching, liked the cozy intellectual atmospheres emanating especially from the English and philosophy departments, but a certain minor-key mood nonetheless entered his work, unlike that of the vigorous urban projects of Los Angeles and New York. The Iowa easel paintings allow an air of elective affinities: moody, dusky, a kind of chalk art that is infused—and occasionally sticky—with languor. They won public appreciation in terms of prizes and prices; yet before leaving Iowa, Guston labored over his first clear masterpiece, *If This Be Not I (1945)* [Pl. 5], in which the previous stickiness is chilled hard by putting meaning and sense at one remove.

A New York show in 1945, his first, was hearteningly received; then Guston moved to St. Louis: Washington University. The figures he'd arranged so deliberately in *If This Be Not I* started now to be ripped empty of stuffing; the fabric slit, but the seams left. The diet is radical, emaciating, vertical, and airlessly close. Guston's anxiety over what it means to be an artist—what it means to be human, period—jams a plague of fellow sufferers so dryly onto the canvases that their origins as creatures of wet paint almost vanish. Kicked by doubt, and going further and further out on an agonized, juiceless limb, he nonetheless won a Guggenheim grant, and then the Prix de Rome. The year in Italy reacquainted him, personally now, with his "pantheon" of Italian masters.In Italy he did not paint but only sketched and drew, waiting.

When he returned to America, Guston soon dropped even the stitches out of his paintings. Thenceforth, he played only with whole cloth: the abstractions of the fifties, for which he is still best known, had commenced.

The fifties as an art phenomenon is too widely documented to explore here. Suffice it to say that Guston's paintings represented a thoughtful, poetic cove of the New York School for many admirers and, soon, disciples. "Abstract Impressionism" was the tag put on it, maybe owing to the decorum of the palette, the pulsing, perspectiveless, amorphous space, and the inch-by-inch climbing and rubbing and chinking of the forms. Harrowed by close attention and care, the paintings were strikingly and availably lovely. Possibly, for the intimate New York art scene of that time, also soothing and ratifying: a Guston canvas from the fifties, taken superficially, usually promised a *community* of forms in close concert.

But, examined in sequence, Guston's work increasingly featured gray and black, active centers, torn middles that detached and hovered. The titles, too, were pointedly individual—*Painter*, *To Fellini*, *Actor* —as though Guston, more than merely hinting, was beginning to say clearly: Enough of being genuises together.

A large retrospective show in 1962 at New York's Guggenheim Museum, and a smaller one, four years later, at The Jewish Museum, served fair warning that the general perception of the nature of Guston's art was perhaps too pat. The paintings of 1962 to 1965 contained only crumbled bits of color, nothing like the previous masonry of tones. In its place were dirty pink and gray washes holding up

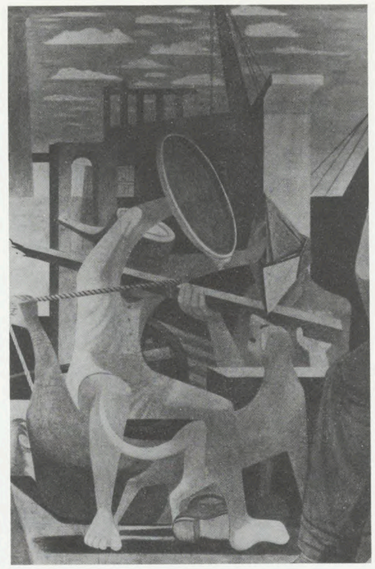


Fig. 2
WORK AND PLAY, detail from mural for Queensbridge
Housing Project, Queens, New York, 1940
Casein resin emulsion on gesso ground, c. 108″ (c. 274.3 cm.)

boulder-like forms that sat centrally like smoke blocked into stone, an air of prophecy about them. H. H. Arnason, in the Guggenheim catalogue, recognized that "it might equally well be argued that [Guston] has never been an abstractionist, but has always been involved with subject painting. Whether the subjects will ever again be representations of objective nature will probably depend on whether he can ever again find a reason for painting a figure or a landscape." And Sam Hunter, in The Jewish Museum's catalogue, could not ignore seeing in the ashen forms "obtrusive individual presences striking uncertain dramatic attitudes, like actors in a play who hadn't learned their parts."

Beyond this compressed and stingy sketch of a life is, I hope, the shape of a *career*. By any measure, Guston had enjoyed great and precocious successes: commissions, prizes, jobs, exhibitions, retrospectives, fame. He may have lacked Pollock's notoriety or the instant identification afforded Kline's work, but there were compensations. The works' strength commanded serious critical attention, that of three especially acute commentators in particular—Harold Rosenberg, Morton Feldman and Dore Ashton. Lazier critics, assuming the orthodoxy of Guston as the "middle man" of Abstract Expressionism, sometimes sniped, but the counterbalance of these other writers was a precious advantage, especially to an artist as intense of mind as Guston. Intelligent critical reception, respectable prices, an established name were all his as he approached age sixty.

Then, with a single exhibition in 1970 at the Marlborough Gallery in New York, he upset it all. What was perpetrated had something of the character of an old-style art scandal, shades of Manet, Duchamp, Stravinsky, Joyce. Walking into the gallery, art lovers came face to face with what many first judged to be an example of that inert, late sixties irony, the "put-on." What was all this? Why, instead of abstractions, were there large paintings that looked like cartoons? That featured Ku Klux Klansmen, and cars, and cigars? Critics felt undercut—or else titillated. Painters whom Guston had known for decades stopped speaking to him. Those who did speak to him were as often as not reduced to stammering. He unexpectedly had shifted the weights of a hard-won art-world balance—historical, stylistic, financial. A younger artist, relatively ahistorical, might have been permitted the heresy, but what possible motive led Guston to tear at the classicism he himself helped establish? One painter even cried to him, "Why did you want to go and ruin things!"

Of Guston's peers, only de Kooning remained unshaken at first look. After inspecting what was on Marlborough's walls, he told Guston, dismissing the nattering about cartoons and politics and bad-boyism: "What's the problem? This is all about freedom."

In 1913, Apollinaire wrote that in turning away from the poignance and poetry of the observed and toward the harsher analytics of Cubism, Picasso had proceeded to "carry out his own assassination with the practiced and methodical hand of a great surgeon." This was exactly what Guston, too, had done: assassinated himself. Had he turned into a landscapist, a portraitist, a dreamy, Bonnard-like househusband, we would probably have understood: an older artist softened by autumnal stirrings. But what to make instead of these cheesy provocations? Few noticed that the act, although bold and disorienting, was hardly rash — Guston had been painting hoods and sticks and lightbulbs and shoes thirty years previously. Instead, everyone was too busy being shocked.

Which, to this day, a good many remain. Though Guston has run through the flaccid seventies with a spine of masterpieces unparalleled in quantity, brilliance, ambulation, and risk by anything in the history of American painting, more of us still don't "get" him than do.

Fig. 3
GLADIATORS, 1940
Oil and wax on canvas, 24½ x 28″ (62.2 x 71.1 cm.)
Collection Dr. and Mrs. Joel Freedman, New York

So we come back all the way around: this business of "getting" and "not getting" art. What we ask from art, and from paintings in particular, is, if not immediate recognition, then at least the security of knowing that we will eventually differentiate impulse from product. A niche will be found. A style or a subject matter, a consistency of attention or pose, either homage to or illustration of a radiant idea eventually will emerge.

But with Guston it hasn't. We don't know where he'll go next; he himself doesn't know, and fastens his mind against even the allowance of knowing. Such spontaneity is now accepted as a rite, but at least we've had the reassurance of the sacraments, their purity and beauty. Yet, Guston waters this wine as well; sometimes he seems to paint *against* painting, as an adversary to art. He has traded respect for a wakened dream. Beginning in roughness and appetite and mystery, the dream finishes there as well. Certain scenes resemble the life, which in turn resembles the scenes.

A sluggard river of Picassoid flesh, meaty especially at the turns—calf, outsized hands, a neck like an eddy — runs through the mother of *Mother and Child* (c. 1930) [Pl. 1]. Hard, straight props and cooky-cutter shapes hold the richly filled figures in check: an arched stool (the miniaturized architecture spiced by Raphael and de Chirico), lovingly grained and sparely nailed; the brick wall we shall see often; the light post, letting down its drop of white bulb like milk—objects that restrain the softness and rapture of the figures, providing them with a frame. A grand, poignant humanness is the home-place here, but the young and hungry excitement of painting sharpens everything. What may have started out as social affirmation is kidnapped by the joy of making, and turns into a hymn to avoirdupois.

Guston, even at a tender age, recognized that to play contrasts off each other in hopes of extracting something finally else was alien to his nature. Succulence and weight had to count. In a study for another canvas of 1930, *Conspirators* [Fig. 1], the young radical joins the kid cartoonist, and together they muscle to the fore spatial and social convictions demanding a meticulous outline. Ku Klux Klansmen are doing here what they do: a lynching, a crucifixion, the foreground nightrider throwing a lurid shadow as he fingers a hawser of lynch rope like a rosary. And Guston's polemical points come so fast they almost trip over one another. All excited excess aside, however, Guston manages to make the drawing chiefly about *silence*. Not for naught had he studied Giotto, Piero, and de Chirico. He wanted the strange and anxious *planted*, not merely left here and there, and with surprising success he achieves just that in this tyro attempt.

While working on the WPA murals, Guston continued to examine the properties of visual weight. But the many more figures, the greater incident that was needed to fill a wall, worked against a rooted scheme. In simpler, more direct colors than before, Guston kept his figures modeled and curvy, but sinuousness didn't completely solve the problem of how to get the forms both frozen and moving at the same time. The aim was not simply to fill space: Guston asked that the image build itself, à la Picasso and Léger, while remaining subject to seized immobility, as in Italian Renaissance painting.

Studying Uccello suggested a way, and its initial fruit appears in a detail from the Queensbridge mural entitled *Work and Play*, (1940) [Fig. 2]. Amidst spire-like cranes and guywires—wrecking slums inappropriate to an America once again in forward gear—are two boys at play, at mock-war. One wears a saucepan on his head as a helmet, the other is hatted by a paper boat. They are fighting: ash can-cover shield versus snapped two-by-four lance. Play is fashioned out of the materials at hand. A dog, in the first stages of amused excitement, looks on.

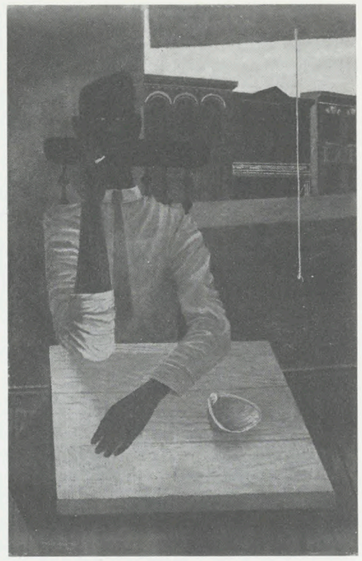


Fig. 4
SUNDAY INTERIOR, 1941
Oil on canvas, 38 x 24″
(96.5 x 61.0 cm.)
Collection of the artist

It was a self-construct of conflict in space upon the armature of its own verticals and diagonals. It was also artifice squared: an image of play, which itself is not "real." Guston recognized further potential here: between these layers, ambiguity, a more sophisticated kind of stillness, might breed. So he did the subject over in 1940, on canvas this time, titling the picture *Gladiators* [Fig. 3], and folding its figures elaborately, twisting the space at points of stress like a ribbon. Diagonals—spars of junk wood—and puckering circles—ash can lids—and the warping pull of the fight draw the composition together. No faces are visible; one kid is even hooded, like the string-'em-up goons of the *Conspirators* drawing. Yet, the painting isn't irrevocably pledged to a swiftly melding swirl; a crescent of sharp specifics runs from the paper hat down through the dog's hempen coat on to the shoe sole.

By 1940, Guston had left the WPA, and had gone on to teach in Iowa. Perhaps in reaction to the fluid human crowding of murals, many of the paintings he did there are unsociably sharp or determinedly singular. They yearn for the poles of emotion, cranky or blissful, yet only achieve illustrations of mood. In *Sunday Interior* (1941) [Fig. 4], a lone black man in shirt and tie, seated at a table before an opened window, smokes a cigarette. The painting is a seesaw of planes: the cant of the haircut modified by the minute angling of the window shade, which is countermanded by the reverse slope of the chair's headrest and the figure's left hand. The message is, "*Keep away.*" Murals could not crystallize sentiment, and this freely acknowledged part of himself was something, too, that Guston wanted exercised. In *Sanctuary* (1944) [Fig. 5], a boy in pajamas at dusk lies in bed, lost in the safe harbor of reverie. It's as delicate and dreamy a picture as *Sunday Interior* is prickly and bothered.

But Guston now was called back to the image that dogged him: children at play-battle. In doing so, he produced his first really major work: *Martial Memory* (1941) [Pl. 8]. The players are still the mini-gladiators, with one extra added, and the dog gone home. Roundness and flow have been replaced by hard, A-like frames out of *Sunday Interior;* even the junk at the boys' feet is sharper and more dangerous looking. Above all, the play has been stripped of much of its previous freedom. Each kid seems more alert to his vaguely mythological role in the play-fight than concerned with the outcome. The picture appears to have caught them at a moment of dispute over who exactly is supposed to do what. Clearly they are stopped and held fast, an effect heightened by the horizon-like regularity of the arcaded buildings and the brick wall, which together drop down through the picture like the disappearing steps of a descending escalator. Daze freezes the scene, as if a ray of seriousness had passed over it. Only one boy's expression is inaccessible. On the faces of the others can be read fatigue, dream, captiousness, worry. Writing about the painting in 1942 for the St. Louis City Art Museum's bulletin, H. W. Janson detected "ritual" here and was deeply impressed. Flat and unemotional in execution, the picture clearly waits on something, a presence just off-canvas and out of reach, which, having stopped these children, is as palpable as their images.

"One of the attractions of childhood," V. S. Pritchett suggests, "is that it is lived under a system of magical rules whose chief use is that they give shelter to the imagination." The rules Pritchett speaks of flash behind and above Guston's next major work, *If This Be Not I* (1945) [Pl. 5], like lightning. *Martial Memory's* tense moment is stretched and snapped. The light has become crepuscular, vaguely electric; the children are stumpier, rounder and more relaxed. Daze now overwhelms the picture. Clutter no longer merely provides atmosphere, but acts technically, pushing the figures close together inside the frame.

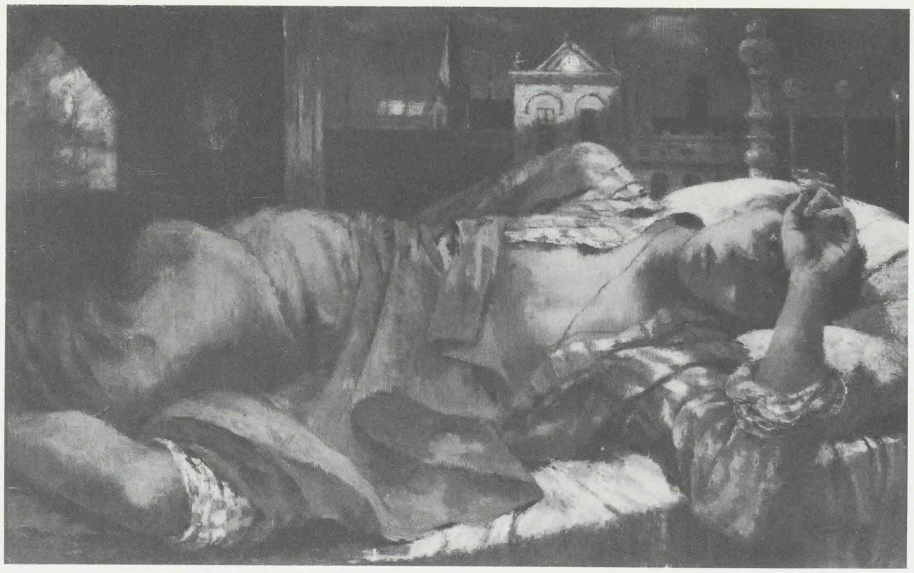


Fig. 5
SANCTUARY, 1944
Oil on canvas, 22⅛ x 35⅞″
(56.2 x 91.1 cm.)
Collection of the artist

These children have ceased *playing* roles: they have become them. We could be catching them at a moment between takes on a movie set, or in a dream, so nonsensically specific are the picture's myriad pale creasings. They seem to be maintained solely upon imagination. An angel of that imagination might be the harlequin at lower right: hands knitted, lips on thumb, eyes off in middle distance, he's one in a line of pure meditators, out of Dürer straight through Picasso.

Despite the Ensor-like and sunken-eyed masks, the concentration camp reminder of the striped-shirted supine figure at bottom left, and the hobgobliny costuming, the painting is never really frightening or awful. What it is, is dense and strange and released from fact. Not only do the delicate, dry tones of whites and grays rise and fall, other levels of shift also operate. Because these maskers are children, there is a psychological give and take. Who but children can be so unselfconsciously silent like this, not discomforted into talk? They are alone and together at once. Thus, plastically, they should be able to be moved very close together without sacrificing separate definition. Guston wanted to see if this in fact could be: a year's work was spent on this one painting. At its completion, he had learned how to move and pile his figures closely, while at the same time constructing a theater in which to house them. Junk, iconography, and ambiguous delicacy come together in a lush, populated, nearly Venetian *mise-en-scène*. Most importantly, Guston for the first time seems to feel truly comfortable with the spirit of nonexplanation that so awed him in his master, Piero. Every inch of the painting is loaded with significance, yet no "point" is ever driven home: hitting the total bar is always resisted.

Masking is tricky business. The intention only to make metaphors can itself become a mask, an unnecessary and constricting layer. By the time he had left Iowa and gone to St. Louis, Guston, a man of ill-hidden emotional pulls, was uneasy with his perfected mummery. Despite the magic of *If This Be Not I*, he wondered if he hadn't been more gnomic than candid in it, if he hadn't embalmed the picture before fully following it through. In a growing mood of artistic and personal compression, he strove to see how meaning and weight would fare in less space, not more.

Thus *Performers* (1947) [Fig. 6], retains only a hint of rounded pleasure: musicians making music which, under conditions of such vertical cramp, would more probably be a series of squeaks than full notes. Once again a figure has hand to mouth—anxiously. In *Porch No. 2* (1947) [Pl. 6], hands are over ears and eyes as well, like the three monkeys.

We are our own masks—there's no need for a second skin. The figures of *Porch No. 2* are pancaked flat, pinned to props as if against rejection, uncomfortably colored in inhospitable chalks of orange and green. A cruciform arrangement keeps the picture rectangular, avoiding cave-in, and hints of the structure of the canvas stretcher in back. There's so little pictorial and metaphorical space that the figures get jammed in any which way, even upside-down, like St. Peter: a precarious, rickety frame just barely held together by bated breath, strained ropes, and shoes.

Shoes. Guston was not alone among Depression-developed painters in finding them usable and repeatable images; you find shoes in an Evergood, a Shahn. Workers' shoes, of course, are classic social identification, with sturdiness in some relation to virtue. But why the image remained with Guston past his involvement with proletarian painting, we can only guess.

A shoe is a front-line intermediary between ourselves and the constant reality of the ground—and we trust its intervention implicitly. It can be used to push at or hold back things, as one in *Porch No. 2*

appears to be braced against the picture plane. Nothing we wear is heavier. Thus, on the verge of abandoning figurative painting, we find Guston including three shoes in *Porch No. 2:* as ballast, perhaps, but more likely as drowning weights.

The way down is very dark at first. *The Tormentors* (1947-48) [Pl. 9] has turned the light down on the flattened figures—and they persevere only in outline. Stitched into the murk like after-images are sticks, a bell-shaped horn, a hood, shoe heels—an incorporeal *Conspirators* or *Porch No. 2*—but all illusionistic composition has been bled away. Some dry light does catch in the only large, filled form, as unstable as smoke, but outline and pattern generally rule otherwise. As he will continue to do for the next thirty years, Guston presents a detailed map lacking only the name, the identity, of the territory it charts.

By *Red Painting* (1950) [Pl. 18], the figures are gone completely, changed into simple densities that, awkward as adolescents at a dance, don't quite know yet how to strike up an association. They align themselves unevenly; they shyly veil themselves; here and there a patch of green or ocher constellates to a loose, boxy central arrangement. Our eye, surging in and out, accedes to the most pleasant of discretions. There is something documentary about this painting, a record of humid exigence, a wish to get paint on the canvas quickly and with all its uncertainness intact. With figuration banished, paint is now Guston's only resource, and *Red Painting* the first of his arsenals.

The whims and vagaries of paint are unleashed for an exhilarated frolic in *White Painting I* (1951) [Pl. 19]. This is the first work Guston ever did without once stepping back from the canvas to appraise his progress. It took him just an hour. His position before the canvas established a physical zone: directly in front, squarely in the middle of the canvas, the greatest population of strokes naturally settled — crowding, giddy with the pleasure of being pushed and in turn pushing within a mob. An arresting haze backlights this mob, almost subsumes it. Guston, the draftsman, is again unbound, exercising a procedure of *ex nihilo* composition, speedy and intricate, producing a painting that appears to have been concluded only by forcibly yanking the brush away.

Over the next four years, Guston's backgrounds develop in an altogether extraordinary way. Paint is applied and thickly stocked, then abraded, shoved, disliked, buried, then scraped one more time. Working close to the surface, Guston goads the abbreviated brushstrokes into becoming functions of dialectic. Mondrian's pluses and minuses certainly haunt paintings like *No. 9* (1952), and *To B. W. T.* (1952) [Pl. 10], dedicated to Guston's Woodstock neighbor at the time, Bradley Walker Tomlin. But the Prime Number, the total solution, of definitive interest to Mondrian, was not a goal that Guston by temperament shared. He was more in his element with instability *per se*. *Porch No. 2*'s brave spindliness is paraphrased in *No. 9* where the small cuts of color both withstand and feed the half-tone fog around them. Reds of various intensity nip across *To B. W. T.* like spits of flame, and the halo of gray and sober yellow is hardly less agitated. Morton Feldman, hitting a difficult note very cleanly, wrote that a Guston canvas "suggests an ancient Hebrew metaphor: God exists but is turned away from us."[1]

Even the loveliness of *Attar* (1953) [Pl. 11] owes directly to visual unease. A ground of fleshtones, careworn to gray in places, backs a migration of precise rose strokes seeking the *ad hoc* shelter of their own company. Guston's old concerns of avoirdupois, recession, location, were never before pressed so subtly. Minute applications of brush project an aura of both great delicacy and doubt: the grace of the twitchy colors is like the humor of the oppressed.

The trend to free and shifting composition is halted somewhat by *Beggar's Joys* (1954–55) [Pl. 17]. The palette is corrective and disciplined. (Guston's color range, out of the tube, always has been, and still remains, fairly basic: alizarin crimson, cadmium red medium, black, white, permanent green light, cadmium orange, cobalt blue; it's the way these have been dealt and compromised that is the beguilement.) The moods and erasures of the previous year's work are tightened. A positive focus begins reasserting itself: the center, and what it's like there. The blacks of *Beggar's Joys* turn its reds like a swollen key inside a lock: in the Kingdom of Center everything is equally strong, the puny can lift the gargantuan, contests are perpetual, sides are always evened up. Thick and throbbing, this clot, raised suddenly out of the soft weather around it, becomes a *contentious* thing.

This unpredictable interaction of centered forms could also be majestic. *For M.* (1955) [Pl. 20] rides on its emptied air, its deft negative space, like a large circumflex of harmony, a bower.

Guston had discovered that focus could be achieved out of only the strains and felicities of colors and weights; and the brilliant wholeness of impression these paintings deliver has much to do with this doughty faith. Dabs and dashes interrelate in ways both fast and fragile. A skylike rose and blue background stirs into muddy reds, oranges, and captured blues in *Dial* (1956) [Pl. 22], while like a mainspring, an arch of green (Guston's consistently most mysterious color) keeps it all tightly regulated. In *The Mirror* (1957) [Pl. 26], this improbable harmony is risked even further — by warping the components of the clot.

The blacks of these paintings didn't once need to indicate where and what the center was; that had been accomplished by Guston's inherent spatial and color tact. "There is a certain friendship of color, so that one joined with another gives dignity and grace. Rose near green and skyblue give both honor and life. White not only near ash and crocus yellow, but placed near almost any other color gives gladness. Dark colors stand among light with dignity, and the light colors turn among the darks," wrote Alberti, in Book Two of *Della Pittura* in 1435, a statement that portends the power of *Dial*. Nervous, alert procedure had invariably located an odd terminal in each painting. Instead of athletic slashes or great operatic gestures, the quietly magnetized valences recommend Kafka's famous aphorism: "You do not need to leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen. Do not even listen, simply wait. Do not even wait, be quite still and solitary. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked, it has no choice, it will roll in ecstasy at your feet." All through the early and mid-fifties, Guston had only to whistle under his breath a levelly perfected melody to settle these beautiful weights and counterweights.

Guston's paintings are forever building up, then eventually closing down theatres. *Martial Memory* pokes open the stage space for *If This Be Not I*, which *Red Painting* then obediently dissolves. The pulsing core of *The Mirror* likewise leases room for new stirrings that begin appearing in *Fable* (1956–57) [Pl. 23] and *Evidence* (1957–58) [Pl. 24], where ropy shreds of heretofore inert black start forward to perform in front of a lowered light in back, a jacked-up one in front. *To Fellini* (1958) [Pl. 27] deepens the vivacity of *White Painting I* seven years its elder, with color this time in full display if not necessarily in control. It is a disorderly, exciting canvas, snapping with an air of rehearsal, of different parts in different involvements. The blacks and determined blues have sprouted limbs; at the right, one black rod harkens back ten years to the horn-player of *Performers*.

Fig. 6
PERFORMERS, 1947
Oil on canvas, 48½ x 32⅜″ (123.2 x 82.2 cm.)
Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York,
Arthur H. Hearn Fund, 1950

Even the titles of 1958 and 1959 note the growing reinvolvement with the willed and willful actor: *Actor*, *The Return*, *Poet*, *Traveler I*, *Painter*. In *Actor* [Fig. 12], a gouache of 1958, an insolently black claw-hammer shape subjugates a red, leg-like form; off to the side, the green-hooded gremlin who witnesses this is thrown back either in horror or simple surprise. It *is* a surprising picture—and not a little humorous. The forms are no longer placed in close collaboration and mutual support: the shapes trap rather than seduce. This breaking out from the communal clot shows up even more clearly in *Untitled* (1958) [Pl. 30]. Schiller kept a rotten apple in his desk drawer, claiming that its smell, as he first sat down at his desk in the morning, welcomed the Muse. Guston's lovely dirty base—a scrumble of pinks and blues—may be his rotten apple, but here it is fairly inert, engaged yet not really contributory. The central goings-on are paramount: swathes of red try gamely but without much success, to beckon or distract or at least deflect the clattery energy of the black and bullish central figure. Too much irrepressible power has been loosed to be squeezed back in. In *Painter* (1959) [Pl. 31], the nature of the energy is unmasked and identified. The black figure could serve as an ideogram of an artist at work: sending out balances, dropping weights, making corrections, producing exactly the sort of painting Guston had been doing over the previous few years. At the tip of one projectile sits a fat crescent of blue—paint on a brush. The painter is wearing a classically floppy red work hat; at his side waits a palette gob of grove green. A motley of light background shades celebrates the self-revelation.

I'm not suggesting conscious allegory here, that Guston was drawing off the foam of one mode and spitting it out of the mouth of another. But having plunged deeply into close focus, start-from-scratch, dust-to-dustness, he was now coming up at its other side. These black centers start to take charge. An old predilection for personage reemerges. Since Guston had come too far simply to double back and begin straight portrayal, the "subject" these stubbornly flexing, individual forms yearned after needed to be one that would continuously (and always differently) discover itself. One that was assertive, willful, yet responsively confused and unpredictable. In other words, the artist himself.

The "subject" has to be the Subject, the agent who proceeds. At first these artist-persona pictures of the late fifties parallel Samuel Beckett's understanding of abstraction: "Total object, with missing parts, instead of partial object." A trio of paintings serially titled *Traveler* feature brushy rectangles balancing on stalks: heads, feet, or a head directly grafted on to a leg. Then, finally, in *Close-Up III* (1961) [Pl. 34], the visage of this newly active agent faces us. A very frontal picture, a very frank one, it floats objects, parts, hints of supporting players inside a sized, shrunken field: broad blue lashings accented by rusts. But our attention goes totally to the "stare" of the black arrivée (and its pennon of green—echoes of Piero's *Resurrection*?). In terms of developed image alone, Guston's abstract work had come to a literal "head."

On into the sixties, these new "heads" seemed to be bringing chill, bad news. Color is stifled; the painted area contracted; beetled shapes sit mysteriously. Had these black totems sucked up the sensuousness and leeway of an entire career? *New Place* (1964) [Pl. 35] is no paradise—a head, its mirror and the painful intimacy of recognition. Anything but radiant is *The Light* (1964) [Pl. 32]: all that is illuminated is conspiracy.

In their size, the uncompromising washed-out blue and gun-metal grays, the poise of their monoliths, there is something undeniably attractive to these works. As caps to a life in art, the harrowed, chthonic statements are powerful, penultimately pure angles. Like Rothko's forbidding last paintings, the purity consoles even as it frightens.

Fig. 7
PAW, 1968
Acrylic on masonite, 30 x 32″ (76.2 x 81.3 cm.)
Collection of the artist

But for Guston, these painting were not capstones. They were only a pause, a mirroring method by which he winnowed his attention. What shouldn't be missed in the yawning, stringy darkness of *Inhabiter* (1965) [Pl. 33] is the opening mouth.

Looking at Guston's drawings of the same period proves instructive. *Loaded Brush* (1966) [Pl. 36] cages an adventurous line that's like the trick snake in the can. A suite of "reduced" drawings of 1966–67 aren't really despairing minimals, but instead, like Japanese paper flowers, beg to swell. Since he first discovered it, Guston has liked Henri Focillon's comment that Rembrandt's hand could not do what his soul objected to. These drawings with their nicked, stubby simplicity betoken Guston's soul starting to speak up anew. In *Head* (1968), his self-defined challenge is as clear as a brand new coloring book's is to a child.

Imagine them, there inside the synagogues of Damascus: awaiting Saul of Tarsus, that purest of zealots, that proven quantity, the celebrated Pharisee who'd come to deliver a good local dose of orthodox hell—and then the awful shock when he does show up (late: he'd had an accident on the road), looking the same but now calling himself Paul and coming out with the craziest things, saying exactly the opposite of what everyone had come to hear.

He'd eventually have to be smuggled out of town in a basket.

Throughout the fifties and sixties, the seductiveness of Guston's paint-handling had established itself as an art-world shibboleth. A lacy but sturdy bridge, it got us across every refinement of interest and shift in direction: those brushy ebbs and flows, the delicate roses and skies, the rich glutens of color playing an ardent game of King of the Hill. No matter that much of this painterliness was the actual evidence of wet-on-wet repainting and erasure. It didn't matter that, even in 1960, in the middle of his most "abstract" period, Guston, in the magazine *It Is* was writing:

> Someone once said, speaking about the public, that if a violinist came on a concert stage and played his violin as if to imitate the sound of a train coming into the station, everyone would applaud. But if he played a sonata, only the initiated would applaud. What a miserable alternative. The implication is that in the first case the medium is used to imitate something else and in the latter, as they say, is pure and abstract. But isn't it so that the sonata is above all an image? An image of what? We don't know, which is why we continue to listen to it.
>
> There is something ridiculous and miserly in the myth we inherit from abstract art: That painting is autonomous, pure and for itself, and therefore we habitually define its ingredients and define its limits. But painting is "impure." It is the adjustment of impurities which forces painting's continuity. We are image-makers and image-ridden.[2]

No matter that in paintings such as *To Fellini*, *Painter*, *Close-Up III*, and *Inhabiter*, an increasingly insistent focus on self-subjectification — hence a new, always flexible *object* — was being formulated. Despite all this, Guston was still considered the elegant, the discreet, continuously low-keyed, and steadily serious "mandarin" of American painting, not the greatest of its celebrities, yet possibly the surest of its poets.

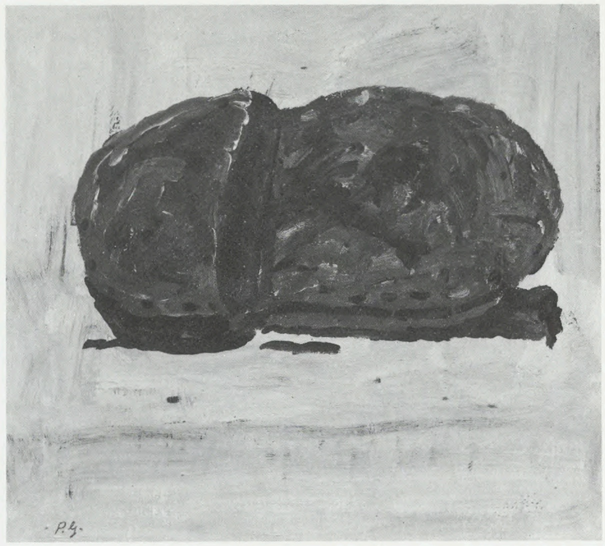


Fig. 8
SHOE, 1968
Acrylic on masonite, 30 x 32″ (76.2 x 81.3 cm.)
Collection of the artist

In 1968, on his own Damascus Road, in Woodstock, out of sight, Guston was setting charges under this beachhead. On small panels—and in acrylic, a medium in which he seldom worked—recognizable, unapologetic objects began to appear: hands, shoes, books, lamps. *Paw* (1968) [Fig. 7] enters its own whited outline from the side, a little anxious over the irreversibility, and puts down a line. *Shoe* (1968) [Fig. 8] accumulates its brushstrokes just short of indefiniteness to leave, like a dropping, a shoe. A whole life's delight with the fleshy, honest weight of things, added to the to-hell-with-it relief of no longer dissembling with abstraction, created these panels, each like the pleasurable sigh which comes with loosened stays.

The problems that Guston was bringing up in these small, seemingly innocuous paintings (in addition to those they would soon cause an unsuspecting audience) were neither minor nor new to him. Train whistle or sonata—whether you approached it connotatively, as abstraction or denotatively, as representation—the old dilemma sat in wait. Image-making is at best a presumption: reality is sufficient and just unto itself. Since, at least unconsciously, all artists know this, they know too that their only approach to the discrepancy is to devise the most transparent of membranes, a style, with which to plug the gap.

Now that he was painting "recognizable" things again, Guston's membrane should have been expected to vibrate more emphatically than ever. If shoes, clocks, books and hands were the subject, odds were that they would be as achingly subtle as any earlier hue or tone.

In fact, they were the opposite. Guston had boldly welded shut his chief escape hatch: his elegance. Elegance is, finally, what certifies possibility, while *impossibility* has always been Guston's most meditated concern. He expected out of figurative work nothing less than the same mix of perplexity the abstract work provided: image as both archer and target. Elegance could only stand directly in the way of this, rooted as it is in the domination of method over things. Instead of giving in to the creating of images of images, Guston pledged himself to an unlubricated approach that admitted style only as a desperate intrusion.

Though it isn't easy to see right off, the image he chose to begin with—hoods—met all of his normative requirements. It served as actor and reflection simultaneously; it was strange, innocent since unexplained, and impossible. *Meeting* (1969) [Fig 9] gathers a number of the hoods together inside a room—or painting stretcher—as though for a last minute briefing before sending them out into Guston's imagination without restriction. The composition begins jimmying open and undermining a properly "artful" box; then, with *Edge of Town* (1969) [Pl. 42], the hoods, and the shock, and Guston along with them, all come tumbling out.

If we recall the drawing for *Conspirators* decades before, these hoods are not a real suprise. The basic, stubby shapes of the cones revert to Guston's young involvement with Picasso and Léger. Clearly also, the cycle of masking and unmasking that is Guston's steadiest rhythm was continuing apace. Why all this was revived *now*, though, was the question. Why did it seem to require such a wide swerve away from politeness? Did the outlining have to be quite that gross that quickly, the low comedy of the comfortably menacing hoods so deadpan? In its cruddy ease, the image was deeply unsettling.

Motives were there for the fishing. Guston as cartoonist redivivus. Guston in outraged political reaction to the tatter and violence available each night on the TV news. Guston as perverse. Guston as

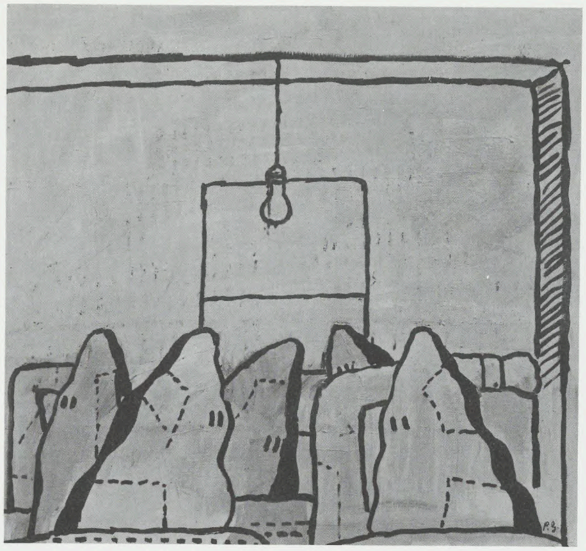


Fig. 9
Meeting, 1969
Acrylic on masonite, 30 × 32″ (76.2 × 81.3 cm.)
Collection of the artist

recapitulator. Guston tired of being misconstrued for so long as a hierophant, a *philosophe*. Even Guston as a late-blooming Pop artist.

Each of these explanations has merit. Part of Guston's new, bristly vigor was definitely pure Bronx cheer, a scandalized and scandalizing reaction to the alkalinity of contemporary art. The world was shuddering under a glut of "news" images—while art went ahead and made stripes. The paintings of 1969, formally, resembled the ghostly blueprints Guston was doing in 1949, fully articulated now. And, for a veteran muralist, the rediscovered pleasures of narrative must have been considerable. In *Edge of Town*, the hoods, sticks, cigars, and hands are all placed with the measured care of any fifties Guston, the steering wheel no less a tightening knob than the lever of black in *Beggar's Joys*. Brilliantly melded are the buff heads over the black hump against the pale blue ground. All of it moves across a seam and into white, like those backdrops in the movies that grant a stationary object—a car—the illusion of motion.

But the breakout of candor is the picture's true hallmark. Take the car. Brushed in as a dark rectangle, perhaps to cover a reconsideration or provide a contrasting base to the hoods, it's clearly been *turned into* a car: the steering wheel quickly planted, the stuck-on rear spare tire left just an outline. The attitude is brash and delighted: *I'm no fool—and neither is art. That's a car, and they're riding around in it!* Declaration and discovery were one more time simultaneous. In 1970, Guston excitedly told Bill Berkson, who recorded the rapture in *Art News:* "You're painting a shoe; you start painting the sole, and it turns into a moon; you start painting the moon, and it turns into a piece of bread."

Still, why specifically the hoods? We understand that it's an image venerable enough in Guston to qualify as an obsession. We follow his interest in maskery. Yet so rough! If they are meant as malediction and summary, don't their bad manners detract?

The Studio (1969) [Pl. 43] answers. As he'd done before in *If This Be Not I*, and *To Fellini*, Guston one more time pulls up the curtain to reveal a main stage. Set in place are props: palette, can of brushes, cigarette, one-handed clock, light bulb, shade, easel. The central character, nonchalantly and quite naturally painting, is a hood. Caught red-handed. If we think the Klansmen are happy monsters, riding around in the clunky cars with their sticks and cigars, gaze here upon the Painter—and see the truest, happiest Monster of all. This cheerful allegory, in attention-tweaking reds and pinks, establishes what is most essential to the gaiety, spirit, and meaning behind Guston's heresy.

Simply, Guston intends to hide nothing. If the truth is to be had, it must be found. The act of finding is resonantly and invariably private. Since it is private, no amount of clear outlining, impoliteness, gross ballooning, or self-mockery will ever do anything but honor its inviolable mystery. Why then pussyfoot? Whether they acknowledge it or not, all artists are stevedores, hardly more delicate, shoving around large, untidy, embarrassing chunks of the real.

Escaped with a bound out of modern art's fastidiousness, Guston discovers an obverse decorum. With narrative at his disposal once again, technique is honed sharp and new. *Bad Habits* (1970) [Pl. 44] only bothers to fill its figures fractionally, letting the blotto-white background, all dominating, be the actual sole cinch of the picture's focus: alcohol. All hangs in a no-space: the drunken hoods look unaware of having done bloody violence to themselves; hazy attention is completely on the central bottle, choked at the neck with green. The entire composition balances with a delicacy insanely out of whack with its

casual barbarities: one of the hoods is flagellating himself; the other is adorned with a chewed-up arm; clocks, mirrors, and knocked-over shot glasses are nauseatingly afloat. But the artist who held *The Mirror* taut, in 1957, by a single tug of red does the same thing with the table in the lower right here: the *virtu* of a dabbed-in solid at an unlikely corner is inestimable.

Whether strewn among a landscape, as in *Flatlands* (1970) [Pl. 46], or, as in *Cellar* (1970) [Pl. 47], swept together into a cut, the quiddities with which Guston was now working acted little differently than the "unidentified" jots and bits of paintwork in earlier pictures. "To be changed each time may be a necessary illusion that we permit ourselves," Guston once said to Harold Rosenberg in a public dialogue. ". . . When you are in the work, you think you're making a leap, but in truth you may be only, say, an inchworm . . . At times when I have gone way out, I find I need to come back for that inch."[3] It's the space *around* these images that is new, a zone cleared by our knowing "what" they are but not quite "why." Guston is pleased to ply this extra room. Key in both paintings is the controlling hand floating near the top, either pointing like a This Way Out sign or holding a ringmaster's whip or brush. The explosion has already occurred, the snips of charged imagery are liberated, and the hands provide direction and command.

Cellar finds the first real tightening of interest inside the Guston rodomontade of liberated objects. Turned-up shoes atop half-buried legs refer back to *Porch No. 2;* and with them, in *Ominous Land* (1972) [Pl. 45], tonality has returned, signaling an adjustment. A horizontal row, a balanced central construction, virile color, the shrinking of brushwork away from top and bottom, even the sun — a radiantly spiked orange child's globe — provide balance: they seem to calm the picture structurally, so that the painter, in the hood, can see what he's got. An image has sproutingly asserted itself, and the hood regards it with some incomprehension. (By lengthening the eye-slits or slightly curving them, Guston extracts a good deal of expression from these lumps. Close-to-the-vest like all Guston actors, they are subject to perpetually disingenuous looks of *Who, me?*) Facing—and faced with—an image it doesn't quite yet have a handle on, but one that's obviously growing in prominence, the hood seems to be crowded out of the frame; its soft, right-triangular inexactness, its wriggling rubber point that served Guston so well as a comic foil to the radicalness of his change (as de Chirico's blind, blank mannequin heads had for him), is upstaged.

In the early seventies, Guston began to paint pictures of figures in bed. Rarely asleep, these figures often were smoking. Their rigid horizontalness created a large long plane on which the artist could ponder and collect himself: nearly all are pictures of hiatus. In *Painting, Smoking, Eating* (1973) [Pl. 39], our attention is nabbed first by the tuberous Mr. Potato Head—he who has been under the hood all this time. The eye is so big that the smooth, plump face around it looks like a mere receptacle, a pressed-in bun. Under the blanket, the unseen body is surely stiff as a board; on top of the blanket rests a plate of french fries that are about as appetizing as railroad ties. (Guston insists, as he has previously, on the embarrassing completeness of simple objects.) Above the bed, as though shot from the eye like cannon fire, is a wall of shoes: those directly in the diagonal line of the gaze are filled with color; those that aren't remain hazier. Along with a drawing finger, brushes, and a pot of paint, it's an entire barricade, then, of subject matter, seemingly embodied by the curling smoke of the cigarette. Bed reverie has been a Guston *topos* since 1944, and *Sanctuary*, but now the eyes of the brooder look not to us but directly at the

thoughts-as-tangibles themselves. Appearance of the big eye and curling smoke serve as reliable signals of Guston in an idealist, faintly Cartesian cast of mind.

With these axe-blade-like bed paintings, Guston had reached a critical pass. The fluent, excited plot stirrings, pitted against everything suggestive in modern art, drove the first, hooded works of 1969 and 1970. Then, in paintings like *Flatlands*, *Evidence* (1970), and *Cellar*, a formal examination was held—an inventory of the riddles, a stress testing. And finally the bed paintings: an even calmer stock taking. The three directions — narrative, plastic, autobiographical/speculative — arranged themselves powerfully together; with these alone, Guston could have had a tripod of great strength. But he chose to go on further. The road, said Cervantes, is better than the inn.

Our vantage point, in *Lower Level* (1975) [Pl. 49], is fittingly insecure. We discover an outcrop of buried, skinny legs sticking up out of a crease—discover them, it seems, at the same moment the upright, cut-off pair of legs also finds them. What to make of these volcanic flowers, forever shuddering? Incomprehension appears to be the very subject. Mined is yet another image of fabulous anxiety: the resolve to work from the bottom up. We, as observers, are issued the same challenge. It is arbitrary and unfair to pick out only those products of an artist's spiritual disturbance which dovetail to the complacencies of taste; for every *Parasol* of Goya there is a *3 May 1808;* each *Attar* is backed by a *Lower Level.*

Seven years now into his new universe, Guston had brought his personal symbology to a fine, investigatory point. If the half-toned pinks and blues are the colors Guston "tunes" to, deep black and red are his colors of choice when chasteness is his aim, when he sharpens his bit in order to drill downward. They served in this capacity in the mid-fifties, with *Beggar's Joys* and *The Room* (1954–55); they do so again with support of the blues and pinks in a triptych of 1975: *Red Sea*, *The Swell*, and *Blue Light* [Pls. 50 a,b,c].

The lava flow of *Lower Level* has come up over the scene. A great red flood, pinched into wavelets, is placed above a neutrally pink, presumably dry ground; below it, a night of unbearable blackness. Whether they remind us of the phrase *Come hell or high water*, or of Rimbaud's sanguineous, arctic vision, images of natural despair like this are difficult; viewers in this age are unaccustomed to such outsized gestures of emotion. Still, the advantage of Guston's new protocol truly begins to assert itself in these three ravenous pictures. Though highly metaphorical, we are confronted with *visible* metaphors here, enigmatic, but also utterly explicit. Their detail clogs the drain of allusion: thick and oily, the painting technique imprisons us on with its sludge, coats us with its images.

In *The Swell*, the sea is at dead lowtide. The floppy shoes poke through with the stubbornness of sculpture, supra-natural phenomena. The paint is churning and implacable. The water of *Red Sea* has risen further, floating up the sole of a shoe, and what looks like a book. Undrowned yet, bobbing to the surface, outlined figures, white-pink as in *The Tormentors*, roll around with an ancient, dance-like sinuousness. *Red Sea* may be the most dire of the three pictures: the eye stares hopelessly; the shade pull suggests less a lifeline than a string attached to a worse, blacker night.

Finally, in *Blue Light*, the sea has covered almost all of the pink, but, unexpectedly, the sense of hope is strongest here. The figures assume the *sang-froid* of survival: ultra-violet, glowing, and cold. Painting stretchers, a dish of cobalt blue, a tentative sun are signs of clemency. Security has been totally washed out of the picture, yet this has also left more space. The skull-like, simian head of the painter has created

an air pocket for himself and his forms (new ones like the shoes and legs, an old one like the brushed-in head and shoulders of a 1964 painting, *Looking*). Arrangement and self-revelation—Guston's touchstones — reign.

The triptych is notable in structure, too. The flood cleanses not one plane but three. "I like a form against a background,"[4] Guston said in 1966, but the evidence is that, even more, he likes it on some sort of ledge — a bench, a porch, a matrix, a car, a bed. Specific images now plant and root the work, thus allowing the solid and precise brick wall to dissolve into a red sea. Water, the classically dialectical element—changing while covering, able to submerge yet reveal—locks under and around the forms with the greatest naturalness. Blue or black or green or red, it is motif that Guston, drawn to its intellectual give, its Odessan constancy, will embrace.

In *Deluge II* (1975) [Pl. 53], the water buoys: the stretched-out, supine painter of *Painting, Smoking, Eating* is siphoned out of his shell and thrown into a churn in which he is one of many created forms. There are at least nine heads now, nine different, hungry, and dancing balls. Not the head but the hand has become chief actor; and all the universe, from Saturnian rings above to shoes below, is festively stirred up. The popping, belching, ego-less agency is water.

This painting and the triptych, in their rush and rumble, are sensuous, textural, painterly things to behold. But ever determined to keep himself unseduced by mere style, Guston presently cracks their joyous sumptuousness with the hard-shelled *Head and Bottle* (1975) [Pl. 55]. When a lima bean head first made an appearance in *Smoking* (1973) (Fig.10), the fact that it gazed skyward, calmly weighing the cloud-like smoke of its cigarette, proved it benign. In only two years time, however, Guston's radicalness had leavened to the point that, sharp focused, we get a head now furiously directed *down*, just a wisp of hair keeping it from falling over completely. The huge eye is slicked back like a scimitar. From the furrows of the brow, through cheek skin shaved so closely it's blue, into, finally, neglected stubble, the head is rendered with a swiftness and fright appropriate to a surface neighboring that terrible eye. Every form is incised into the picture as though with a blade.

No scapegoats in this painting, not even those of polite art. The green liquor bottle, presented without perspective, with take-it-or-leave-it bluntness, is laid flat, nailed in place by the stare of the eye. The brush and the long, bread-like book have suffered the same flattening. Such an ugly painting it is: the painter as Monster, vision-wielding and paralyzed, is not always a pleasant sight to see. In comparison, *Bad Habits* had all the pressure-decreasing valves of farce.

The green bottle of *Head and Bottle* bleeds an anomalous red shadow. The same grieved, guilty color spreads out beneath the eye in *Web* (1975) [Pl. 54] — and here the significance of these pools starts to clarify. Little of the dismaying definition is lost—same eye, same stubbled cheek—but strong feeling has dirtied and soldered the surface by use of the pink and gray half-tones again. Drier in a different, more leeched-out way than *Head and Bottle*, *Web* is figured in pairs: pairs of bugs, of heads, of base stains. On the topmost horizontal, the bugs knit the painting downward into being; it is a picture about death's terrible net. But the painter's fallen head alone only half explains the melancholy. Another head, purposely eyeless and frontal, leaking a puddle not of remorseful red but of chlorophyll, of regenerate green: this bi-lobed form is Guston's wife, Musa.

The winged and bowering shape that appeared in *For M.* in 1955 has become this. Her colors are

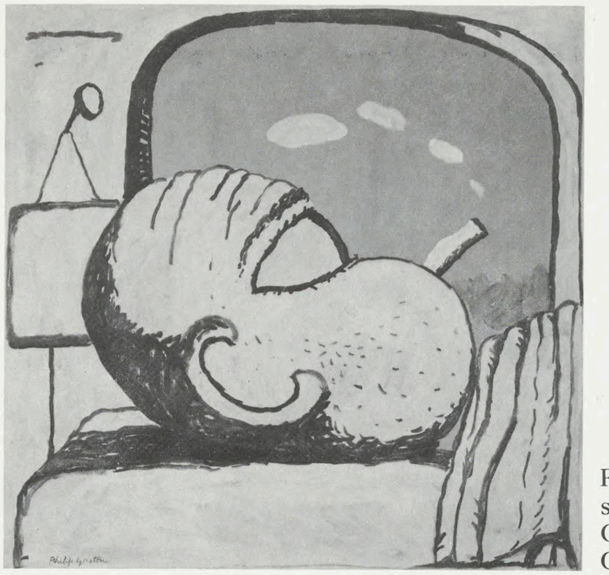


Fig. 10
SMOKING, 1973
Oil on canvas, 52¾ x 54″ (134.0 x 137.2 cm.)
Collection of the artist

golden or green. Into the work of an artist already clenched to the almost appallingly frank, Musa's image darts like a needlework stitch that pulls countless paintings even closer to the personal. In *The Palette* (1975) [Pl. 48] her name appears on a scroll sharing space with a painting table; the letters could well have come up by themselves, unbidden, like a message. The brushes appear permanently stuck into the spurts of palette paint, unable to flee the approach, up from the bottom, of a coffin, its lid askew. *Web* has continued this chilling touch of paralysis and premonition: one toppled, one upright, the two heads are the heel and sole of a single shoe.

Perhaps only Montale, the great modern Italian "hermetic" poet, has also, at so high and risky a level, surrendered to this equilibrium of the personal and the terrible, and made equal art of it. Both artists achieve tones that are eerie and ravishing, and unconcerned with "rules." Montale's late poems, often direct addresses to his wife Mosca in both life and death, stop where they want to, never totaling or explaining: they deny the possibility of the "objective" voice. So it is with Guston. Musa's head is so close and annealed to his, that in dozens of works he has only to make a self-reflection—and she is right there, too: not an image exactly or a reference or something even to be seen, but as a kind of *decal*. In *Source* (1976) [Pl. 59], Musa's head rises into a bronze air, high enough over water for the curve, the very rounding of the earth, to be revealed. A beacon or sphinx, she is haloed by a green, channeled radiance. (Roberta Smith, writing in *Art in America*, alertly touched on the possible reference to Piero's *Madonna del Parto*.)[5] The simple Egyptian lashes, the deft layering of stresses, the hashmarks of light that fall upon the water like tears: she is mysterious, patient, providential.

This very personal way of painting is extended to the common poetry of *Cherries* (1976) [Pl. 60]. At first it seems that here, finally, is a new Guston we can look at without being rattled. Attention has settled on one of summer's nicest gluttonies: just as it's almost impossible to stop eating them, painting cherries-in-season demands just one more, too. There are, however, indications that Guston is up to old tricks—the stems, for instance. Aside from making each fruit look like an anarchist's bomb, fused and at the ready, the stems—like handles—appear to have let down the blisters of heavy roundness onto the plane as though each might still need additional cranking around and fixing. Exactly what kind of painting, so antiperfect, is this? Not quite a still life. Not quite an abstraction. Those stems like nails, the single black fruit, the dumbbell weightiness, the rude crowding: what else could it be but "the adjustment of impurities," the image-ridden whimsy of a helpless image-maker?

Thinking about Scriabin once led Pasternak to conclude: "Indeed, it is not only true that music needs to be more than itself if it is to mean anything, but that everything must surpass itself in order to be itself." 1976 was a year in which the naked candors of Guston's personal, water-borne paintings shared studio space with works, done sometimes in the same week or day, which were so much more than themselves that they made even the painter nervous. *Pit* (1976) [Pl. 58] is red and black once more, the gear-shifting signal, with the frame on top like the window on a furnace. Sulphurous and brimstoned, lit by jets of flame, the picture is so overly much that we are forced to plant our feet before it and bear down to take it seriously. We all know better than to credit such hellish histrionics.

Yet if french fries and cherries can enter Guston's painting shorn of gracefulness, why can't ideas and suppositions? He's taken a cliché here and hit it so hard that it staves in. Everything in *Pit* is spectacularly thick yet on the verge of collapse: the ladder, the lip of the hole (ringed, incidentally, like the painter's

eye), the characteristically downcast head, the shoes and leg parts glowing hot like newly cast screws and bolts. Like the prisoner who saws out a circle of the floorboards beneath him, Guston wants to fall through. Signorelli would have understood. The infernal is treated not far differently than the cherries: taking the plainest, most hoary of givens, stripping off its coat of dignity, and watching what it does, how it clumps.

If we followed *Pit*'s ladder all the way down, we might well come to the dry, lighter environs of the *Rug* (1976) [Pl. 62]—surely a scarier worse place, composed of stamping, skinny, abominably naked legs, or a plumber's nightmare of pipes and conduits, or an artist's megrim of circles and knobby forms arising from and returning to nowhere. Floorboards replace water as base. The entire congeries is just barely enough under control to crowd itself into a small red fringed rug. *Green Rug* (1976) brings us up for a closer look: a single pair of legs, putting down steps enough to do a dance studio proud—were that dance studio on the edge of the world. We see specifically now why the legs are under some control, too. Whip (we know in whose hand) and legs speak the same language: skillful compression, edge-walking, a brilliant use of rectangles in the midst of minatory chaos.

The twined, anonymous limbs of *Gladiators* in 1940 were perhaps prototypes of the legs. The unclear starts and finishes, the dismembered dependencies of form, return us to the immediate and unsummarized pictures of the fifties. Luminous clots of color are a long way from hairless, skinny legs wearing horseshoes, yet Guston seems to know a shortcut. Though legs may stomp around as threateningly as the Klansmen/hoods, as forms, they knot and are calmed. *The Floor* (1976) [Pl. 57] features a bunch that seem to be leaning on each other, taking a breather, stacking their ovoid shoe-shapes in a pile. Spasms of motion persist, off to the left, and the planking is there in case they choose to start stamping once more. The informing impression, though, is of time-out as in *Martial Memory*.

By *Monument* (1976) [Pl. 61] something approaching stasis has been reached. Guston's favorite *istoria*, his particular and reiterated solid, has always been a center pulled by contradictory gravities, something centered yet bolloxed. Some of the legs look as heavy as stone, others like corrugated piping, still others like fleshless casings. Resting like *Source* on a minute slope, we are struck by a sensation of size: this dolmen is unthinkably large. A pure *whatzit*, in other words: something that can't possibly exist, but can no more possibly disappear. Weaving the legs, throwing them over each other, achieving a table up top, making their shoes be an elevator here and a pendulum there, Guston is aware that the balance owes equally to strangeness and to plastic values.

It's what Kafka knew also. That beyond imagination, all is calm—and triply terrible, since the mind there, bespelled, surrenders its freedom. Past a certain point, nothing is more "normal" or "regular" than the odd; and whatever it was that brought this image of dismembered limbs to Guston—nightmare, intriguing structural complexity, remembrance—whatever it was, he goes about illustrating it innocently and generously, as parents are innocent and generous who add to the world they know not what.

The two strands of 1976, the private/autobiographical and the grotesque, knot in *Wharf* (1976) [Pl. 56], one of the richest, most indelibly moving of contemporary paintings. Put together without an inch of pause is a single mass of painter, glass, easel, wife, limbs, all sitting in a glimmering sea. By now we recognize each separate element, down even to the subtleties: the painter's dread-filled eye, and the God-help-us ones of Musa; the torn-off mob of legs here beginning to look slightly sad-sack, actors in the

same comedy Guston produced with the awful-turned-hapless hoods. Like a sentence written in script, the undulating form of the whole ends with the easel's exclamation point. The elements, forged as one, ride up into their own special weather, a *sfumato* that's neither air nor water but a numbing fog. In this in-between realm, frozen and run through, sits the composed image—an ingot of nobility, love, and unspeakable punishment.

One time, in Woodstock, I stood next to Guston in front of some of these canvases. I hadn't seen them before; I didn't really know what to say. For a time, then, there was silence. After a while Guston took his thumbnail away from his teeth and said, "People, you know, complain that it's horrifying. As if it's a picnic for me, who has to come in here every day and see them first thing. But what's the alternative? I'm trying to see how much I can stand."

Never has Guston been able to shake his fascination with the impossible. An article for *Art News* in 1965 is entitled "Piero della Francesca: The Impossibility of Painting"; one for the *Art News Annual* of the next year is called "Faith, Hope and Impossibility." For The Museum of Modern Art's *12 Americans* show in 1956, Guston, in his statement, wrote, "Painting seems like an impossibility with only a sign now and then of its own light."

The Gustons of the mid-seventies, self-mirrors that exist inside a territory as threatening to the artist as to us, snap the clauses of that 1956 sentence. Guston holds onto the first part; the second part he has left to the others. Never more clearly than in the paintings of 1976, he works instead at making the impossible explicitly visible. What if you went to the other side of the known, and instead of discovering the sublime Null, you found *something*, lots of different somethings?

In the last five years he has encountered so many different somethings that he is barely able to keep up. He has found overcoats, for instance. In *The Coat* (1977) [Pl. 65], one looms up before us like an intact temple in the middle of nowhere. There is a suggestion of columns and doors; Pythagoreanly calm, a polyhedron is offered; like *Monument*, it's a tantalizingly "abstract" picture. However, the comedy of the unnamable recalls us: no head or body inside this coat, no high priest in the temple—but there is a label.

More disorder, more rumpledness pervades *The Coat II* (1977) [Pl. 64], more of a hint that somewhere inside the Gogolian conceit may in fact be an actor. Taller, a bit less sure of its balance, this second garment struggles with its paraphernalia. Shoes and books perilously wobble; a shoe on the left, about to drop from grip totally, is held up by a rescuing shadow. Nothing is inside the coat except the spirit of statuesque fumbling. There are buttons but no buttonholes: so much for perfection.

Back View (1977) [Pl. 63] ties off this trio of coats by getting up and leaving. Like Goya's *Colossus*, the coat heaves away, turned from us just when, frustratingly, a head or brain or pounced halo has appeared. Not only are the shoes being taken but also the buried legs attached to them—all uprooted. Morton Feldman in 1965: "As we make a metaphor about creation, it has made a metaphor about us . . . Guston is of the Renaissance. Instead of being allowed to study with Giorgione, he observed it all from the Ghetto—in the marshes outside Venice where the old iron works were. I know he was there. Due to circumstance, he brought that art into the diaspora with him. That is why Guston's painting is the most peculiar history lesson we have ever had."[6]

Guston as painter. Guston as diaspora Jew. Guston as overcoat. As much as for its warmth, the

overcoat is indispensable for its many pockets: little that's hard-won need ever be relinquished. If you have to leave in a hurry, as you will always have to do, everything essential is on your person. Made big and baggy and styleless enough, the coat may even be able to hide you completely—though there isn't much that can be done about the manufacturer's label.

As tectonics alone, *Back View*'s carrying off of the shoes and legs, the individual packets of imagery, points to a development in the pictures of 1977. A mortared-up, sculptural quality succeeds the more distributed imagery. X-rayed floaters, as in *Blue Light*, return in *Cabal* (1977) [Pl. 68], but they're mounded like the cherries, without any intervals. The fierce eye, which once had a little room between itself and its object, no longer owns any looking-space: the Seer is stymied. Instead there are numerous eyes, a phalanx of selves, curved into one another and phosphorescent against the black, as though Guston were saying that there may be freedom aplenty in constantly up-ending and surprising yourself, but rarely is there a lot of room.

Another sculpture, *Red Blanket* (1977) [Pl. 70], mounts up out of the night, the blanket folds like the steps of a Mayan temple, Musa's sleep-wild hair and mottled forehead like the hut on top in which the sibyl waits. Stringy all over, lashes and strands and fringes, the painting nonetheless appears shockingly solid—something seemingly at the side of Guston's unconscious rather than from the front, as *Wharf* is, or as *Monument*, at the back. Counterweights compose *Pyramid and Shoe* (1977) [Pl. 69] as well. Side-to-side heaviness is unbalanced by the small dip in terrain, which threatens to send the Trojan-horse of a shoe rolling down to crash into the base of the timeless pyramid. Unmistakable fun is had here: the unmagnificent shoe, rendered in grisaille, made to look consciously "old," clearly has no right threatening something so augustly perfect as the eternal tomb, but that is what is occurring. As classical as 1977's paintings may be, in comparison to the turmoil of 1976's, Guston still retains no taste for piety. *Black Sea* (1977) [Pl.72] approaches grandeur, but even in the title there is something approximate. Because the sea, really, seems more green, dashing coldly in currents under a coral, ecstatic sky. The central solid is of such slippery mutability that the moment we decide it's this, it becomes that—a frame, a shoe, a Musa, an omega or an alpha. Obeying the dictates of the decal, Guston obligingly includes the hashmarks of light; by putting them, however, way over to one side, he nearly doubles the disembodied "stare" quality of this most impressive painting.

But then the old itch to mayhem returns: *The Street* (1977) [Pl. 73] is not only *Martial Memory* thirty years later, and a version of Uccello's *Battle of San Romano*, but is tossed with plain cussedness and powered by an assault on everything finicky and formal. Absolutely nothing isn't warped. The ash can, supremely gross, is the sort of fort, stocked with old Guston ammunition of bottles and sticks that a Beckett would appreciate. The tide of legs is multiracial. The paw-held lid-shields appear none too sturdy. In this gigantically subversive picture, the intellectual battering to which Guston's forms have always been subjected is made explicit: *Fight, fight*, he goads them, *mix it up*. But no contact is ever quite made. Which side is gaining? Which losing? Are the legs advancing or in retreat? It's busy and pugnacious, but mostly there is inefficient chuff. The two bugs at the bottom are probably amused, knowing what we should know as well: that, in a Guston, there never is any "winning."

The brawl of *The Street*, its roughing-up of all innateness, pitched Guston into 1978 cleansed and clarified. *The Ladder* (1978) [Pl. 81] is all spare, queer, luminous calm. Slung over the top rung of a

Fig. 11
PAINTER'S FORMS, 1972
Oil on masonite, 48 x 60" (121.9 x 152.4 cm.)
Collection of the artist

ladder, a single leg, doubly shod, maintains impossible balance. So weak-ankled that it can't rest firmly, the bottom part of the leg is discreetly "wrong," the sole and heel of the shoe unequally wide. This wrongness steeps through the whole picture: the leaning, irregular ladder, the incline of the shadow, the stutter of the horizon. How then does it stand? The favorable and specific aegis of the Musa/sun/brain on the horizon, a golden thumbprint of what Guston likes to refer to as the "generous law" of art is the leveller, propping the oddness against the delicate, lightsome pulse of the background. The generous law, in Guston's case, is amended with the rider of risk: Its virtual definitions as slippery as grease, this painting should not by any convention "work" at all, yet it vibrates in the mind.

The same spirit of law and oversight shades *Track* (1978) [Pl. 77]: a toad-like foot pushing a ball along a track that is barely hoed and widened by the scraping heel of the foot. Light is shut off, reduced to stripes, but little of it was ever required: predetermination vises the picture. The artist who pushes furthest is also likely to be the one who first reaches art's obdurate boundaries, who feels the most slotted despite his daring.

This question of obedience and resistance is diagrammed in *Orders* (1978) [Pl. 74]. Ash can lids, legs and shoes resist those designations, locking together into a Stonehenge of forms, compressed beyond that final inch of apartness *The Street* had allowed. Conflicts and vacuums of space are expressed on the most unadorned of levels; the faintly metallic ring of the red-blue contrast suggests the echo of a spectacle we came in just a minute too late to witness: huge, willful weights fusing clangorously without concern for what the painter did or didn't wish.

Having subjected many of 1978's other forms to combat and to enslavement, Guston's self-appearance in these paintings is, not surprisingly, also modified. Where brushes are cudgels, as in *Poised* (1978) [Pl. 76], it's enough to notice that the cup they rest in smokes a cigarette: immediately we know who it is we're seeing. Simple discs—simple, that is, but for a few arms still grasping them—are ash can lids or cross-sectioned slices of leg or paint tube caps. In the thick of paint, whirl is most definitely king: everything in motion, yet stock still at the center.

The stillpoint in *Steppes* (1978) [Pl. 71] has been trampled by legs out for a last go-for-broke stampede. Flushed and overheated, gross descendants of *Attar*, they charge like Cossacks—but solely within the low-ceilinged confines of the top plane, lending a delicacy and improbable grace to the whole thundering horde. Intricate, tensely threaded, suggesting inner ratios, these are free and relaxed actors no longer: they run for their lives, as if to escape the devouring doom of a *Painter's Forms II* (1978) [Pl. 75]. The first *Painter's Forms* [Fig. 11], in 1972, was a coughed up explosion of Guston's elementary "stuff": shoe, bottle, stretcher, cigarette, nameplate; here, between the separate forms, was guileless space, welcoming openness.

Six years later, the head needs only to be a mouth crunching the snipped and emptied leg-tubes with bullet teeth. Once *Steppes* had resolved certain formal difficulties of movement and direction, the legs could be farmed out leaving Guston free to reenter the pitch of *Dark Room* (1978) [Pl. 67] in search of other finds. The blind-stabbing brush, live as a glowing wire, is taken up and followed. The isolated islands of form it illuminates—light bulb, a book on a round table, vacated floorboards and painting table—are all elements from which to start afresh.

Still, Guston as overcoat, nothing is ever permanently discarded. And so, temporarily blocking the trend away from self-imaging, stand a pair of extraordinary portraits. Both, naturally, are of smokers. One is savagely hilarious, the other an emblem of subtlest power. Everything I've written here, all my snipping and tying, is raucously exploded by *Smoke* (1978) [Pl. 79]. Floored both by planking *and* water, littered with not one but six lightbulbs, a canvas, a shade, a wall, butts, brushes, *Smoke* is a self-buffooning anthology. Like any veteran smoker, Guston will occasionally light one cigarette while another is still burning—and he's got seven of them going at one time here. The ear looks suspiciously like a chunk of a limb and the cap of marcelled, brilliantined hair sits like a brain-hat, just a touch too small. The green window shade, its pull magnifying a portion of the wall, is patched like the face: whatever hides is bound to take a few cuts and scrapes. This dandy with the hemorrhaged eye paints with two brushes at once. When, in 1970, the word cartoon was bandied about to classify Guston's new work, not many, I think, who used it could have anticipated a painting like this, which *is* a true cartoon. All about excess and its corollary corrective of never taking yourself over seriously. And, having turned the mouth of the cannon to the artist and let it go off, anything but a joke.

The other portrait of 1978 is quite different and not only because of its pure, unoccupied background. Again in profile, though more *parti*, *Friend—To M. F.* [Pl. 80] is, once more, a *fumeur*, the Guston artist/thinker/self. But this isn't Guston himself — not exactly. The friend here is Morton Feldman, large in physical chassis, and bulky in Guston's life as friend and fellow. The grand, plain clarity reaches back to Piero and the massiveness of the Montefeltro profile, but the scale works on different and deliberate levels. The ear is huge: Feldman is a composer. The chest and neck are alpine. The eye is the familiar cutlass reserved for those who suffer vision as well as utilize it, and the cheek is a boil, lips and mouth obscured by jowl, cigarette jutting out like an exhaust pipe.

Caricature has long been a Guston fancy, but something, besides the heavy demeanor of volume, edges this portrait past mere exaggeration. The smoke that tangles from the cigarette seems to be that something. As though a genie of the flesh, the smoke is red. Other faint shapes, laxly painted out, adjoin it like conjurings. A wisp in contrast to the swollen head, the smoke nonetheless avidly soaks up the gaze. It is being desperately stared at and dreamt through, creating an unlikely focus which sets the head in motion. Reds and blacks surge up toward the crown, as though with helpless feeling; the stolid becomes an area of flux.

We hide in our friends, either continually created anew in their judgment, or else held fast, more solid than we know ourselves actually to be. Shoaling through the Feldman head is precisely this great ambiguity of comradeship, of masking, of two minds sometimes together and sometimes apart. What at first seems like a burgher-definite image astonishingly changes into what is perhaps the most purely abstract picture Guston ever has produced.

The slate is more or less wiped clean in 1979 by *Pull* [Pl. 82]. Closing down over subject matter comes a shade, difficult to know how to raise; a strip of purplish daylight up top is promised if we find the solution. Will the ball attached to the chain explode with light, given a good tug? Guston entered the last year of the seventies mindful of the same questions, intrigued anew with the puzzles of structure. Pull what? Where? How?

He works in warmer, brushier, more porous tones. The objects in *Plain* (1979) [Pl. 83] could be the

Fig. 12
ACTOR, 1958
Gouache on paper, 22⅝ x 28⅝″ (57.5 x 72.7 cm.)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

detritus left over after *Street's* mêlée, or the drive shafts, broken down, that Guston's father machined for the railroad. An old shape, the claw hammer of 1958's *Actor* [Fig. 12], makes a reappearance, with the bare associations of forms also recalling the fifties. A trademark frozenness is achieved by the ash can lid that will totter forever without falling to the planking. Guston is taken with the textures, with the contrasts between the riveted metal, nailed wood, and quilted cloth; and all shapes oblige the examination by being very dry and direct. The living fleshiness of Guston's recent output turns strictly material in this painting, as though a wrench had been purposively thrown in, damage inflicted in order to bring the works to a halt and allow a slightly different kind of tinkering.

This reactive interest in the impersonal is parabled in *Entrance* (1979) [Pl. 84]. The door is yet one more performative image, something that shows the thing and employs its function simultaneously. At first it seems to have been kicked wide by the rush of legs; but, no, the legs look much too folded-in, Cubistically overlapped, to be moving at all. It's more a wall of them than a stampede, and at the base of this wall, calmly sauntering in, are the newest additions to the Guston repertory company: bugs. And we remember: this is how Guston regularly presents his subversions—with absolute poise. The door's blankness ushers our eye toward the poleaxed pudding of legs first, and only then, by chance, do we notice the unruffled procession of bugs below. The last thing you expect to find is that which always has the surest footing.

See *Ravine* (1979) [Pl. 78]. Bugs have shown up in earlier Gustons: in *Web*, in *The Street*, atop sundry brick walls, as *memento mori*, as simply flies in the ointment: mischievous impurities. But until now, they'd never been mobilized to center stage. The geology they scramble over is thick, core-heavy, and time-worn. Also slippery, rendering the bugs' ascent all the more undaunted and inexorable: there's no stopping them. Could it be because, not so accidentally, this pile of rock, so lovingly notched with faults and shadows, looks also a little like flesh? Like, in fact, the chest, neck, and head of *Friend-To M. F.*, had that magic mountain been laid on its side? Could this toehold for bugs be the great willfulness and ego of the artist? Does the maker have not only feet of clay, but an entire body?

It's hard to imagine anyone but an artist like Guston even daring, at this stage, to bring the subject up. But provocatively up it certainly is in *Moon* (1979) [Pl. 85]. An artist who has spent so much energy in making the image of the maker, and the issues that attend it, into a template, who has so exposed his dreads and joys, who has at his command an enviably responsive set of meaningful personal signs—for him then to undercut his hard-gotten spoils. . .

We should expect it. The brushes are spent in *Moon*. The bugs, moving pebbles twice their size, mock the pea-dimensioned braveries of the artist. Whether on the earth of nature or the painting stretchers of art, their steps are sure. And all the artist can do is hide his face.

In a funk once, feeling sorry for myself when something I was working on was fighting back, I wondered in a letter to Guston if it wasn't the sheerest gall to assume, when you came right down to it, that there was *any* nourishing relationship between the artist and the art. It went its way—and you tagged along a good number of paces back, in agony. Guston, a hair-trigger when it comes to questions like these, ones he mulls over all the time, wrote back promptly, disagreeing. "It is not gall—no, it is shame—shame to be an artist—shame to create—Embarrassment—a huge dose—to be an artist . . . God says, 'Don't fuck around with my stuff, boy—you just love, adore, cherish what I have made.' But, the next

hour, and [my] desires have changed. I WANT TO MAKE."

Hence, the humid landscape of *Moon:* born of shame and stubborn will. Nothing is ever too "good" or "bad" or "obvious" or "strange" that it's denied admittance to the "new place" of the imagination, yet every tenant there is on edge.

Perhaps the ultimate question ought to be: How could Guston possibly *not* stick crosswise in our contemporary throats? The pricking he's given our vanity, our knowledgableness is sufficient crime. Here is an artist on whom we assumed we had a steady fix—only to be given the slip. It's bad enough when the dead do this to us; but then at least we can back and fill. Picasso is gone only a small number of years, yet the qualities for which he is most remembered are surely two: the fame and the magnificent, unequaled facility. Buried in the back of our memories are all those relentless sabotages, the identifiably beautiful shattered into planes and swatches, then the coming-out again, and the rages and razzes and reassassinations continually thereafter. We're all too ready to assign all of this to puckishness, the randy gnome in the striped shirt who did anything he wanted, because he could. One way of putting miracle-makers out of mind is to make them saints.

Fortunately for him Guston's beatification is a ways off. He once may have come close, but then he swerved away in time—and now his miracles are far too raw. His bothersomely specific universe of reappearing forms and insistent actors is an embarrassment and an uncleanness to us, whose art of late is mostly sublime hazes, tiny tics, or modesties of craft. And he forces connoisseurship to cry out painfully at what it sees as the waste of luscious mastery spent upon these whatzits. *Be a little nicer*, *a little less richly*, lovers of art yearn to petition.

On deeper levels, too, he nettles. Ever since Cézanne and Flaubert and Wittgenstein, we accept that to represent an object isn't quite the same thing as pointing it out: things *are*, but signs show. To show, to make a sign, you need some distance from the thing, in front or in the rear, or at this or that side of it; you have to step far enough back to point comfortably.

Guston knows this—but bends the rule. He starts pacing back or to the front or to the side, but suddenly he stops and points prematurely. What he's pointing to therefore gets lanced with his finger, and the two are made promptly inseparable. Every painting is a permanent Kabob.

It isn't that he's unaware of the niceties. He knows that it is art's clever game to allow the word *shoe* to be actually shoe instead of an eosh. He knows that, conversely, to view a skillfully untampered depiction of the boats into which we all put our feet is curiously ennobling. But he has the bad manners to mix these both up. The Guston shoe is not a sweeping together of pieces, is not particularly "real looking," is neither a granulation, nor a paraphrase. The part that isn't lovely is ugly, why hide the fact?

He both loves the objects of the world and is cast down by them. Depression and delight are impartially described with a foolish amount of courage; foolish courage—art-making—in turn becoming one additional and transcendent object for the artist's consideration.

Guston enters his art like a man going into a dark, dark room that might be filled with bombs he has but, accidentally, to trip. Or, it's always possible, there may *not* be bombs—only cherries. "Thou canst indeed be sought and found, but thou canst not be anticipated," warned St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and if

there is one sterling quality to any Guston it is steadfast nonanticipation. It has been the basis of his life in art. When, in the fifties, he made a statement like "Painting is a clock that sees each end of the street as the edge of the world,"[7] most took it as an instance of a metaphorical bent of mind. Now we know better—and have to catch up.

If we can't or won't "get" Guston; if we insist on turning away from this cataract of imagery more splendidly "wrong," more powerful and haunting than any the age has lately seen; if we're going to fault him, it is only because he has taken being an artist more literally and seriously than we have. He hasn't slipped behind art; rather he's put himself side-to-obvious-side with it. Art-making, image-stealing is shameful, unnatural work, and Guston's lavishly available reaction to his participation in it—trouble-making, exalting, rageful, despairing, comic, precise, moving, and unstoppable—are those of the heroic artist.

It's a type so long out of view and favor that we don't quite know what to do with it. Which is not to say that we have ever quickly known.

Notes

1. Morton Feldman, "After Modernism," *Art in America*, November-December 1971, p. 73.
2. "The Philadelphia Panel," *It Is.*, Spring 1960, p. 38.
3. "Conversations. Philip Guston and Harold Rosenberg: Guston's Recent Paintings," *Boston University Journal*, Fall 1974, p. 50.
4. Harold Rosenberg, "Liberation from Detachment," *The New Yorker*, November 7, 1970, p. 136.
5. Roberta Smith, "The New Gustons," *Art in America*, January-February 1978, p. 105.
6. Morton Feldman, "Philip Guston: The Last Painter," *XXXI Art News Annual 1966*, 1965, p. 100.
7. "Statement," *It Is.*, Spring 1958, p. 44.

CHRONOLOGY

1913 Born June 27, Montreal, Canada. Family emigrated from Odessa, Russia, c. 1900.

1919 Family moved to Los Angeles, California.

1925 Began drawing seriously with the encouragement of his mother.

1927–28 Entered Manual Arts High School, Los Angeles. Became good friends with Jackson Pollock. Together they expanded their knowledge of art through the influence of their teacher Frederick John de St. Vrain Schwankovsky, who introduced them to contemporary art periodicals, modern European painting, Oriental philosophy, and the teachings of mystics Krishnamurti and Ouspensky.

c. 1928 With Pollock, expelled from high school for distributing satirical protest pamphlets attacking the English department. Pollock was readmitted; Guston never returned to high school.

1929–30 Worked at odd jobs during the day, including occasional work as a movie extra. At night and on weekends, continued painting and studying on his own.

1930 Awarded year's scholarship to Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles. Met Reuben Kadish with whom he became close friends.

After three months, discouraged by the teaching at Otis, abandoned scholarship to study on his own. Resorted to studying art books for self-training, especially finding resource in Italian masters such as Michelangelo, Mantegna, Giotto, Masaccio, and most importantly, Piero della Francesca.

Through Reuben Kadish met the Los Angeles artist Lorser Feitelson, who encouraged his work and introduced him to the work of other Renaissance masters. Through Feitelson, visited Walter and Louise Arensberg's collection of modern European art. In the Arensberg collection first encountered the work of Giorgio de Chirico, which made significant impression on him.

1931 First exhibition of work at Stanley Rose's bookshop and gallery, Los Angeles.

Along with Reuben Kadish and other friends, responded to the Marxist philosophies of the John Reed Club which urged artists to abandon the idea of "art for art's sake." Together they painted portable murals which depicted the plight of the American Negro, specifically working on a series of frescoes that dealt with the case of the Scottsboro boys. These frescoes were destroyed in a police raid.

Obtained small supporting role in the movie *Svengali*, starring John Barrymore, a 1931 remake of the film *Trilby* (1923). In the movie, he was cast as an artist at work in his atelier.

c. 1932 Became aware of Mexican mural movement. With Jackson Pollock, visited Pomona College, Claremont, California, to watch José Clemente Orozco at work on his mural, *Prometheus*, for the school.

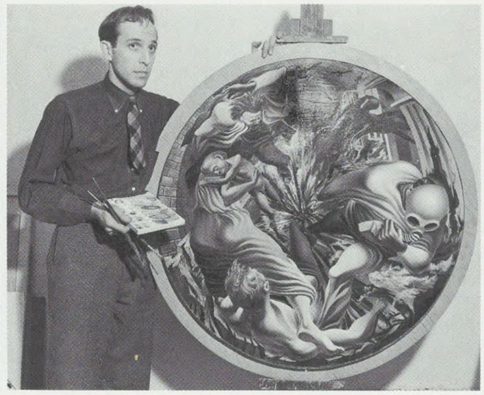
1933 Participated in his first museum exhibition, the *Fourteenth Annual Exhibition of Painters and Sculptors*, Los Angeles Museum.

1934 Traveled to Mexico with Kadish and the poet and art critic, Jules Langsner, to seek mural work with David Alfaro Siqueiros. Worked with Kadish on wall mural in Maximilian's former summer palace in Morelia. The subject was "The Struggle Against War and Fascism."

Returned to California with Kadish to undertake a commission in Duarte, near Los Angeles, for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (I.L.G.W.U.) Tuberculosis Sanitorium.

Philip Guston, c. 1930

Philip Guston explaining his mural for the Queensbridge Housing Project to local children, 1939



Philip Guston with *Bombardment*, tondo picture, c. 1937

1935–36 Winter. At the urging of Jackson Pollock and his older brother, Charles, decided to move to New York City. Stayed with Pollock and his brother, Sandy McCoy.

Joined the mural section of the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP).

Greatly influenced by modern European art seen in the A. E. Gallatin collection and other New York museums and galleries.

1937 Married Musa McKim.

1938 Received mural commission for United States Post Office, Commerce, Georgia.

Often met and talked with other artists on the mural project, including Burgoyne Diller, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, Stuart Davis, and James Brooks, among others. Began to question his commitment to the Renaissance vision.

1939 Received first major mural commission for facade of Works Progress Administration building at the New York World's Fair. Titled *Maintaining America's Skills*, the mural won first prize in the outdoor mural category based on a poll of public opinion.

Received WPA/FAP commission to design a mural for the lobby of the community center of the Queensbridge Housing Project, Queens, New York. The completed mural, identified both as *Work and Play* and *Cultural and Recreational Activities of a Community Center*, was regarded by the artist as his first important pictorial statement. Mural still exists although defaced, with the artist's signature removed.

1940 After completing the Queensbridge mural, resigned from WPA/FAP mural project.

Began to concentrate on easel painting.

1941 Painted *Martial Memory*, a work the artist considers his first mature statement as an easel painter.

Executed decorative murals for three ships of the President Steamship Lines: *S. S. Monroe*, *S. S. Van Buren*, and *S. S. Jackson*. Murals were removed when ships became troop carriers for World War II.

In collaboration with his wife, Musa McKim, executed murals for the United States Forestry Building, Laconia, New Hampshire. Mural still exists.

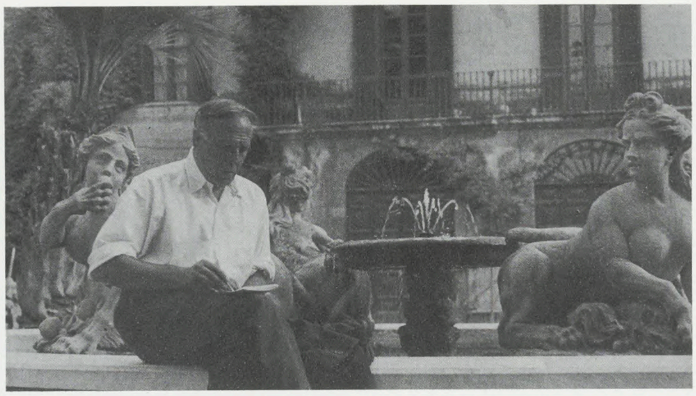
1941–45 Accepted position as Artist-in-Residence, State University of Iowa, Iowa City. During this time, concentrated on painting studio pictures: arrangements of figures and objects, children, and portraits of his wife and friends. Became interested in the more painterly artists of the Renaissance, especially Venetian colorists.

1942 Completed mural commission for the Social Security Building, Washington, D.C., titled *Reconstruction and Well-Being of the Family*. (Although he left the WPA/FAP in 1940, this mural, a commission granted by the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Art, was not completed until 1942, nor installed until 1943.)

1943 Daughter, Musa Jane, born.

Attended classes in celestial navigation in order to be able to produce murals as visual aids for pre-flight training in the Naval Air Force. Commissioned by the US Navy to do a group of drawings used in the training of fighter pilots.


Philip and Musa Guston, Woodstock, New York, 1941


Philip Guston sketching in the park of the Villa Sciarsce, Rome, 1960

Commissioned by *Fortune* magazine to record pictorially defense industries and army air-training programs of the Central Training Command. Made many trips to airfield training centers in Texas. Completed paintings of commandos and fighter pilots, principally.

1944 First one-man exhibition of paintings and drawings, State University of Iowa, Iowa City.

1945 First one-man exhibition in New York, Midtown Galleries.

Awarded first prize for the painting, *Sentimental Moment*, 1944, in the exhibition, *Painting in the United States, 1945*, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

1945–47 Moved to St. Louis, Missouri, to assume Artist-in-Residence position at St. Louis School of Fine Arts, Washington University. Appointed head of painting department.

1946 Awarded John Barton Payne Medal and Purchase Prize for the painting, *The Sculptor*, 1943, in *The Fifth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings, 1946*, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond.

1947 Returned to Woodstock, New York. Met and became good friends with Bradley Walker Tomlin.

Awarded John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship.

Awarded Altman Prize for the painting, *Holiday*, 1944, in the *121st Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Sculpture, Water Color and Graphic Art*, National Academy Galleries, The National Academy of Design, New York.

First experimentation with purely abstract paintings.

1948 Awarded Prix de Rome, American Academy in Rome.

Awarded grant from The American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York.

Awarded Purchase Prize for the painting, *The Porch*, 1945, in the *University of Illinois Competitive Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, University of Illinois, Urbana.

1948–49 Traveled to Italy for a year. Did not paint during this time; studied firsthand the work of the old masters. Also traveled to Spain and France. Drew cityscapes from hotel windows, including *Drawing No. 2 (Ischia)*.

1950 Spring. Visiting artist, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

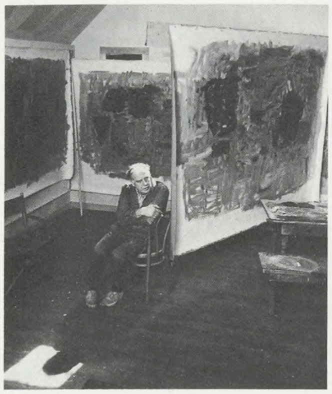
Summer. Moved permanently to New York City. Met and conversed often with other artists and writers living in New York, among them Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, John Cage, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Morton Feldman, Harold Rosenberg, and Thomas Hess.

Drew copiously.

1951 First one-man exhibition of abstract paintings, Peridot Gallery, New York.

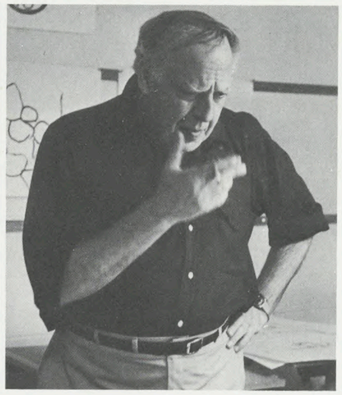
1952 Became affiliated with Egan Gallery, New York.

1955 Along with other major painters in New York, including de Kooning, Kline, Pollock, and Rothko, joined the Sidney Janis Gallery.



Philip Guston in his studio, Woodstock, New York, c. 1964

Musa Guston in Woodstock, New York, summer 1979



Philip Guston, 1970

1956 Included in the exhibition, *12 Americans*, organized by The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

1958 Included in the exhibition, *The New American Painting*, organized under the auspices of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. and circulated throughout Europe to introduce the work of American Abstract Expressionist artists.

1959 Awarded Ford Foundation Grant. After receiving grant, did not formally teach again until 1973.

Awarded Flora Mayer Witkowsky Prize for the painting, *The Street*, 1956, in the *63rd American Exhibition, Painting, Sculpture*, The Art Institute of Chicago.

Retrospective exhibition, *V Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna*, Sao Paulo, Brazil. The work of Guston and David Smith were featured in this exhibition.

1960 Summer. Three-month trip to Europe where he had a major presentation of work in the *XXX Biennale Internazionale d'Arte*, Venice. Also devoted time touring Umbria to restudy Piero della Francesca.

1962 Retrospective exhibition, *Philip Guston*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, circulated internationally.

1966 Retrospective exhibition, *Philip Guston, A Selective Retrospective Exhibition: 1945–1965*, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts.

Major one-man exhibition, *Philip Guston, Recent Paintings and Drawings*, The Jewish Museum, New York.

1967–68 Again began painting figurative works.

Awarded second John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship.

1970 Awarded Honorary Degree, D. F. A., Boston University.

Elected Trustee, American Academy in Rome.

Exhibited publicly, for the first time, his figurative work, Marlborough Gallery, New York.

1970–71 Traveled again to Italy where he was invited to be an Artist-in-Residence at the American Academy in Rome. Visited Orvieto, Siena, Arezzo, Florence, Venice, Sicily, and Greece.

Painted extensive series of oils on paper, mostly of formal gardens, and imaginative paintings of Etruscan and Roman excavations from sites seen on travels. Became interested in Renaissance architecture.

1972 Elected member of The National Institute of Arts and Letters, New York.

1973 Retrospective exhibition of drawings, *Philip Guston Drawings 1938–1972*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

1973–78 Appointed University Professor of Art, Boston University.

1974 Joined David McKee Gallery, New York.

1975 Awarded Distinguished Teaching of Art Award, The College Art Association of America, New York.

1978 Elected member of American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston.

Elected Professor Emeritus, Boston University.

STATEMENTS BY THE ARTIST

"What is seen and called the picture is what remains — an evidence.

"Even as one travels in painting towards a state of 'unfreedom' where only certain things can happen, unaccountably the unknown and free must appear.

"Usually I am on a work for a long stretch, until a moment arrives when the air of the arbitrary vanishes, and the paint falls into positions that feel destined.

"The very matter of painting—its pigment and spaces—is so resistant to the will, so disinclined to assert its plane and remain still.

"Painting seems like an impossibility, with only a sign now and then of its own light. Which must be because of the narrow passage from a diagramming to that other state — a corporeality.

"In this sense, to paint is a possessing rather than a picturing."

12 Americans. Dorothy C. Miller, ed.
New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1956.

"I do not see why the loss of faith in the known image and symbol in our time should be celebrated as a freedom. It is a loss from which we suffer, and this pathos motivates modern painting and poetry at its heart.

"I think the only pressing question in painting is: when are you through? For my own part it is when I know I've 'come out the other side.' This occasional and sudden awareness is the truest image for me. The clock-like path of this recognition suppresses a sense of victory; it is an ironic encounter and more of a mirror than a picture."

Nature in Abstraction.
New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1958.
Quoted in catalog essay by John I. H. Bauer.

"It is not always given to me to know what my pictures 'look like.' I know that I work in a tension provoked by the contradictions I find in painting. I stay on a picture until a time is reached when these paradoxes vanish and conscious choice doesn't exist. I think of painting more in terms of the drama of this process than I do of 'natural' forces.

"The ethics involved in 'seeing,' as one is painting—the purity of the act, so to speak—is more actual to me than preassumed images or ideas of picture structure. But this is half the story: I doubt if this ethic would be real enough without the 'pull' of the known image for its own 'light,' its sense of 'place.'

"It is like the impossibility of living entirely in the moment without the tug of memory. The resistance of forms against losing their identities, with, however, their desire to partake of each other, leads finally to a showdown, as they shed their minor relations, and confront each other more nakedly. It is almost a state of inertia—these forms, having lived, possess a past, and their poise in the visible present on the picture plane must contain the promise of change. Painting then, for me, is a kind of nagging honesty with no escape from the repetitious tug-of-war at this intersection."

From a letter to John I. H. Bauer, Curator, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, in reply to a questionnaire on the role of nature in abstract art, 1957–58.

The New American Painting.
New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959.

"I have been asked to say something about the recent work. The easiest thing to say is that I paint what I want to see.

"Like Babel with his Cossacks, I feel as if I have been living with the Klan. Riding around empty streets, sitting in their rooms smoking, looking at light bulbs . . . windows . . .

"*A Day's Work* was finished in June 1970. It is one of the last of a group dealing with this subject."

Art Now: New York, 2: 8, 1970.

"It is the bareness of drawing that I like. The act of drawing is what locates, suggests, discovers. At times it seems enough to draw, with the distractions of color and mass. Yet, it is an old ambition to make drawing and painting one.

"Usually, I draw in relation to my painting, what I am working on at the time. On a lucky day a surprising balance of forms and spaces will appear and I feel the drawing make itself, the image taking hold. This in turn moves me towards painting—anxious to get to the same place, with the actuality of paint and light."

"Philip Guston: Ten Drawings."
Boston University Journal, Fall 1973.

"A certain anxiety persists in the painting of Piero della Francesca. What we see is the wonder of what it is that is being seen. Perhaps it is the anxiety of painting itself.

"Where can everything be located, and in what condition can everything exist? In *The Baptism of Christ*, we are suspended between the order we see and an apprehension that everything may again move. And yet not. It is an extreme point of the "impossibility" of painting. Or its possibility. Its frustration. Its continuity.

"He is so remote from other masters; without their "completeness" of personality. A different fervor, grave and delicate, moves in the daylight of his pictures. Without our familiar passions, he is like a visitor to the earth, reflecting on distances, gravity and positions of essential forms.

"In the *Baptism*, as though opening his eyes for the first time, trees, bodies, sky and water are represented without manner. The painting is nowhere a fraction more than the balance of his thought. His eye. One cannot determine if the rhythm of his spaces substitute themselves as forms, or the forms as rhythms. In *The Flagellation*, his thought is diffuse. Everything is fully exposed. The play has been set in motion. The architectural box is opened by the large block of the discoursers to the right, as if a door were slid aside to reveal its contents: the flagellation of Christ, the only "disturbance" in the painting, but placed in the rear, as if in memory. The picture is sliced almost in half, yet both parts act on each other, repel and attract, absorb and enlarge, one another. At times, there seems to be no structure at all. No direction. We can move spatially everywhere, as in life.

"Possibly it is not a "picture" we see, but the presence of a necessary and generous law.

"Is the painting a vast precaution to avoid total immobility, a wisdom which can include the partial doubt of the final destiny of its forms? It may be this doubt which moves and locates everything."

"Piero della Francesca: The Impossibility of Painting."
Art News, May 1965.

"There are so many things in the world—in the cities—so much to see. Does art need to represent this variety and contribute to its proliferation? Can art be that free? The difficulties begin when you understand what it is that the soul will not permit the hand to make.

"To paint is always to start at the beginning again, yet being unable to avoid the familiar arguments about what you see yourself painting. The canvas you are working on modifies the previous ones in an unending, baffling chain which never seems to finish. (What a sympathy is demanded of the viewer! He is asked to "see" the future links.)

"For me the most relevant question and perhaps the only one is, "When are you finished?" When do you stop? Or rather, why stop at all? But you have to rest somewhere. Of course you can stay on one surface all your life, like Balzac's Frenhofer. And all of your life's work can be seen as one picture—but that is merely "true." There *are* places where you pause.

"Thus it might be argued that when a painting is "finished," it is a compromise. But the conditions under which the compromise is made are what matters. Decisions to settle anywhere are intolerable. But you begin to feel as you go on working that unless painting proves its right to exist by being critical and self-judging, it has no reason to exist at all—or is not even possible.

"The canvas is a court where the artist is prosecutor, defendant, jury and judge. Art without a trial disappears at a glance: it is too primitive or hopeful, or mere notions, or simply startling, or just another means to make life bearable.

"You cannot settle out of court. You are faced with what seems like an impossibility—fixing an image which you can tolerate. What can be Where? Erasures and destructions, criticisms and judgments of one's acts, even as they force change in oneself, are still preparations merely reflecting the mind's will and movement. There is a burden here, and it is the weight of the familiar. Yet, this is the material of a working (process) which from time to time needs to see itself, even though it is reluctant to appear.

"To will a new form is inacceptable, because will builds distortion. Desire, too, is incomplete and arbitrary. These strategies, however intimate they might become, must especially be removed to clear the way for something else—a condition somewhat unclear, but which in retrospect becomes a very precise act. This "thing" is recognized only as it comes into existence. It resists analysis—and probably this is as it should be. Possibly the moral is that art cannot and should not be made.

"All these troubles revolve around the irritable mutual dependence of life and art—with their need and contempt for one another. Of necessity, to create is a temporary state and cannot be possessed, because you learn and relearn that it is the lie and mask of art and, too, its mortification, which promise a continuity.

"There are twenty crucial minutes in the evolution of each of my paintings. The closer I get to that time—those twenty minutes—the more intensely subjective I become—but the more objective, too. Your eye gets sharper; you become continuously more and more critical.

"There is no measure I can hold on to except this scant half-hour of making.

"One of the great mysteries about the past is that such masters as Mantegna were able to sustain this emotion for a year.

"The problem, of course, is more complex than mere duration of "inspiration." There were pre-images in the fifteenth century, foreknowledge of what was going to be brought into existence. Maybe my pre-image is unknown to me, but today it is impossible to act as if pre-imaging is possible.

"Many works of the past (and of the present) complete what they announce they are going to do, to our increasing boredom. Certain others plague me, because I cannot follow their intentions. I can tell at a glance what Fabritius is doing, but I am spending my life trying to find out what Rembrandt was up to.

"I have a studio in the country—in the woods—but my paintings look more real to me than what is outdoors. You walk outside; the rocks are inert; even the clouds are inert. It makes me feel a little better. But I do have a faith that it is possible to make a living thing, not a diagram of what I have been thinking: to posit with paint something living, something that changes each day.

"Everyone destroys marvelous paintings. Five years ago you wiped out what you are about to start tomorrow.

"Where do you put a form? It will move all around, bellow out and shrink, and sometimes it winds up where it was in the first place. But at the end, it feels different, and it had to make the voyage. I am a moralist and cannot accept what has not been paid for, or a form that has not been lived through.

"Frustration is one of the great things in art; satisfaction is nothing.

"Two artists always fascinate me—Piero della Francesca and Rembrandt. I am fixed on those two and their insoluble opposition. Piero is the ideal painter; he pursued abstraction, some kind of fantastic, metaphysical, perfect organism. In Rembrandt, the plane of art is removed. It is not a painting, but a real person—a substitute, a golem. He is really the only painter in the world!

"Certain artists do something and a new emotion is brought into the world; its real meaning lies outside of history and the chains of causality.

"Human consciousness moves, but it is not a leap: it is one inch. One inch is a small jump, but that jump is everything. You go way out, and then you have to come back—to see if you can move that inch.

"I do not think of modern art as Modern Art. The problem started long ago, and the question is: Can there be any art at all?

"Maybe this is the content of modern art."

Philip Guston's text is based on notes for a lecture given at the New York Studio School, New York, in May, 1965.

"Faith, Hope and Impossibility."
XXXI Art News Annual 1966, October 1965.

SELECTING WORKS FOR THE EXHIBITION

An Essay by Henry T. Hopkins

January 1979 was set as the time for the selection of works to be in the exhibition, three long and arduous days. Fortunately, I was able to stay in a comfortable guest room attached to Guston's studio, a very large industrial space with good light and heat and divided into work, storage and presentation areas. The advantage of this accommodation was that the work was readily available as was the attendant smell of creativity. And neither Guston nor I could escape the environment.

We came together armed with books, catalogs, documents — any publication which contained reproductions of Guston's work—as well as our own preconceptions of how the exhibition should look. In addition to published material, Guston has maintained a wonderfully developed and organized photographic file covering works from the earliest periods to the present. Recent paintings, and those from earlier times which are still in Guston's possession, lined the studio walls in stacks of four to five deep. From this combination of resource material we were able to see virtually every work which he had produced.

We were dealing with the creation of nearly fifty years of work, but even at that, one had to marvel at the sheer numbers and continued vitality of the effort. The evidence pinpointed the fact that several different shows, with very different cants, could be configured.

Our first decision was a relatively simple one: to work within a framework of eighty to one hundred pieces to be chosen, reviewing not only Guston's painting output, but the important role that his drawing has played as well. The variation in total numbers was based upon the scale of works to be selected, and upon the space available in the various museums on the tour. From that point on, the decision-making became more complex. We agreed that the result of selection should be the best possible exhibition, but how that was to be interpreted lay in the laps of the gods.

Guston's initial view was that everyone already knew the work through the abstract paintings of the early 1960s, and that those works had been widely seen and completely documented. What needed to be dealt with was the new work of the 1970s. Some of this work had been seen in exhibitions in New York at the Marlborough Gallery and David McKee Gallery, but there was also the very new, very powerful work which had not been seen at all.

Note: We must devise a title for this attitude on the part of artists for it is consistent enough to be called the *Artist's Law of Selection:* What is most recent is the most exciting to the creator, because, theoretically, it represents the accumulation and culmination of all that had happened before.

My view, as a museum person, was that a whole new audience had grown up since 1962, when Guston's first major retrospective was organized by the Guggenheim Museum and shown only in New York and Los Angeles in this country. I felt there was a renewal of interest in the work of the 1930s and 1940s, especially among young people, and that Guston's work of this period would afford a special insight to this new generation. I was particularly interested in the work of the transition periods, from figurative to abstraction and back again. While the paintings of the transition periods may not be the most complete as objects, they are often illuminating and provide clues to understanding the evolution of Guston's creative growth. Along with Guston, I also felt that the new work should be given some emphasis. In addition, I wanted to see the full circle of activity which, in Guston's case, differed so from the more or less straight-line evolution of his peers such as Still, Rothko, Pollock, Kline, Motherwell, and even de Kooning.

I felt I knew Guston's work and had an affinity for it. When I was an art student in the 1940s his *Martial Memory* of 1941 symbolized the way in which I would like to paint. In 1963, as a junior museum curator, I installed his Guggenheim retrospective at the old Los Angeles County Museum where I was able to see and feel his transition from figurative to nonfigurative work through such paintings as *The Porch*, 1945, *The Tormentors*, 1947–48, and the breakthrough *White Painting I* of 1951. I was responsive to the rich and colorful intertwining surfaces of the abstract work of the 1950s, and, therefore, was disturbed by the darkened palette and the implied object references in the most recent works in that exhibition, for example *Close-Up III* of 1961.

I was further confused by the work shown in The Jewish Museum exhibition of 1966, where those strange, dark, indefinable objects, in groupings of three, two and one, glowered out from their gray and pink enmeshment. These paintings raised strong questions in my mind. Was it really necessary for a world-class artist to push beyond a position of acceptance? The need to struggle forward was obviously there, but where was it all going?

An extended dialogue between Philip Guston and one of his consistent advocates, the late critic Harold Rosenberg, published as the essay for The Jewish Museum's exhibition catalog, provided some interesting insights into Guston's own self-questioning at that time.[1]

GUSTON: When there's no model in front of you, no model concept, that is, and it's impossible to paint as you did last year, then what are you doing?

ROSENBERG: Let me ask you a question, one which would be likely to occur to anyone. You speak of rejecting, a constant process of rejecting, and one of the criteria of rejection is that what is before you reminds you too much of you. You want to get out of yourself. You want to get into new territory.

GUSTON: New territory has to have recognition in it too.

ROSENBERG: What kind of recognition?

GUSTON: It has to be new and old at the same time, as if that image has been in you for a long time but you've never seen it before. When it comes out, it must have this double experience in yourself. I can't accept something which is so new that there's no recognition of myself in it.

ROSENBERG: A big problem has to do with the fact that your paintings have a great deal of resemblance to one another. Or let's say a great deal of thematic continuity. It's as if your paintings of the last three were one long . . .

GUSTON: That wouldn't matter, because we're talking about how it feels when you do them.

ROSENBERG: But also that the way the painting looks to you while you're doing it is part of your process of doing it. That's how you got on the subject of erasures. So the question of how the painting looks is basic.

GUSTON: How it looks to me?

ROSENBERG: To you. How it looks in relation to your self-recognition. These are the terms we have been using.

GUSTON: Well, certain definite things can be said about the work of the last three years. It began developing earlier, but in the last years there's been, obviously, no color. Simply black and white, or gray and white, or gray and black. I did this very deliberately, and I'll tell you why. Painting became more crucial to me. By "crucial" I mean that the only measure now was precisely to see whether it was really possible to achieve—to make this voyage, this adventure, and to arrive at this release that we have been talking about without any seductive aids like color, for example. Now I've become involved in images and the location of those images, usually a single form, or a few forms. It becomes more important to me simply to locate the form. So I use the most elementary way of making a mark, which is black on white. The reason it becomes gray is the erasures. Here, for instance (pointing to a painting), this form is black, and since you're working wet on wet all the time—it all has to happen at once, you know—it's gray. You scrape out and put white over the black. In sum, it's a question of locating the form you're making. But this form has to emerge, or grow, out of the working of it, so there's a paradox. I like a form against a background—I mean, simply empty space—but the paradox is that the form must emerge from this background. It's not just executed there. You are trying to bring your forces, so to speak, to converge all at once into some point.

ROSENBERG: Would you say that the intention is anti-artistic, or that it has nothing to do with art?

GUSTON: It's a strange thing to be immersed in the culture of painting and to wish to be like the first painter.

ROSENBERG: Many an artist wants to be the last painter.

GUSTON: I imagine wanting to paint as a cave man would, when nothing has existed before. But at the same time, one knows a great deal about the culture of painting, and one is conscious of that culture.

ROSENBERG: You know Mallarmé's formula for the poet? He calls him "un civilisé édenique," a civilized first man.

GUSTON: That's marvelous. Exactly what I mean. I should like to paint like a man who has never seen a painting, but this man, myself, lives in the world museum. Obviously, the painting is not going to be a primitive painting. I hate primitive painting, anyway.

ROSENBERG: The primitivism of a cultivated painter.

GUSTON: But the question is: Why do I need this? We were speaking of erasures. They represent erasures of notions and of good intentions. Knowledge of what you thought you know, but really don't know. In this condition of not knowing, you arrive, not at a state of ignorance, but at a state of knowing, the only thing you can know at the time—and that is what is concrete. We're talking about the real thing, of what goes on, because you're not making a painting, obviously. You are using this material; it's symbolic material. You use space and pigment, and your problem is, what should be where? It's matter I'm working with. But the fact that I'm doing it on a flat surface causes me no end of trouble and contradictions. You can't walk around it as you can a sculpture; you have no different point of view.

ROSENBERG: Is that what causes it to appear as a thing? The fact that you haven't seen it before?

GUSTON: Oh, yes. Imagine bringing into existence a thing which, as you said earlier, doesn't have to follow you around, that's not a domestic pet, but exists by itself. My quarrel with much modern painting is that it needs too much sympathy. The fascination of certain great paintings of the past is that they don't care about the sympathy you have for them. All the art lovers in the world could march off a cliff, and they would still be there.

For many of us, after The Jewish Museum showing, there was a good-sized blackout concerning Guston's development. He might have been painting brilliantly, but one just didn't know. The art world had chosen to turn its collective back on the New York School. Maurice Tuchman's *New York School, The First Generation* exhibition, developed for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1965, seemed to be an excellent summing up statement of the movement rather than a call for re-evaluation. Pop Art and Post-Painterly Abstraction: Andy Warhol and Frank Stella dominated American art headlines. Guston and others of his generation became admired but estranged senior citizens.

In 1966 Guston, working with Professor Joseph Ablow, gave a talk at Boston University where, as in the earlier Rosenberg dialogue, he revealed some of the trauma of impending change.[2]

GUSTON: I think the original problems, that were posed after the war period (World War II) in painting, were the most, to my way of thinking, the most revolutionary problems posed and *still are*. In other words, nothing is dead. You can't put it under a rug and pretend it's gone. I think the reason for wanting it to die off, in terms of critics, dealers, museums—the establishment of the art world, officialdom, avant-garde officialdom, same thing as any other kind of officialdom—they saw the work of Abstract Expressionism as style, as a certain way of painting. Now if it's seen that way, then, of course, styles come and go. I mean, everybody gets sick of a certain style. After ten years or fifteen years, you're bored sick of it. Younger painters come along and want to react against it. I think that was one of the motivations for trying to kill it off. It's dead. And then, of course, the American idea of change enters into it, like the idea of new emotions, new feelings, having to find new forms. All this is true. All that exists, and there's nothing wrong with it. Yet, I could not paint another minute in the way I do if I didn't believe that this was a revolution; it really was a powerful revolutionary instinct, which *may* have lost its power, which may have lost its efficacy, in our current emotional climate. That's possible, but that can change. All right, now, what was this revolution? That's really the issue. What is it about?

I think it's about, I know it's about and revolves around, the issue of whether it's possible to create in our society *at all* . . . Whether one should not make pictures; everybody can make pictures; thousands of people go to school; thousands go to galleries, museums; it becomes not only a way of life now, it becomes a way to make a living. In our kind of democracy this is going to proliferate like mad. In the next ten years, there will be even much more than there is now. There'll be tons of art centers, and galleries, and pictures. Everybody will be making pictures.

The real question is . . . . Painting and sculpture are very archaic forms. It's the only thing left in our industrial society where an individual alone can make something with not just his own hands, but brains, imagination, heart, maybe. It's a very archaic form. Same thing can be said with words, writing poetry, making sounds, music. It is a unique thing. Just imagine, 99 percent of the people just report somewhere, are digits, go to an office, clear a desk, get plastered, and then, they do the same thing the next day. So what is this funny activity that you do? What is it? I think that the original revolutionary impulse behind the New York School, as I felt it anyway, and as I think my colleagues felt and the way we talked all the time, was a kind of a . . . you felt as if you were driven into a corner against the wall with no place to stand, just the place you occupied, as if the act of painting itself was not making a picture, there are plenty of pictures in the world—why clutter up the world with pictures—it was as if you had to prove to yourself that truly the act of creation was still possible. Whether it was just possible. It felt to me as if you were on trial. I'm speaking very subjectively. I felt as if I was talking to myself, having a dialectical monologue with myself to see if I could create.

What do I mean by create? I mean that the things I felt and that I enjoyed about certain painters of the past that I liked, that inspired me, like Cézanne and Manet, that thing I enjoyed in their work, that complete losing of oneself

in the work to such an extent that the work itself, even though it was a picture of a woman in front of a mirror or some dead fish on the table, the pictures of these men were not pictures to me. They felt as if a living organism was posited there on this canvas, on this surface. That's truly to me the act of creation. It didn't at the time for reasons I don't understand myself . . . I still worry about it and puzzle about it, and I go two steps backward, because I'm puzzled by a lot of problems that I would not know how to begin talking to you about, and these problems revolve around abstract painting or nonobjective painting or image-making, and, of course, I'm seeking a place, an area, where these questions would be dissolved, where they don't exist, where somehow in me all this would come together . . . I mean that's my hope. So as I was going to say, for reasons which I do not understand, the late forties, early fifties, when I went into nonfigurative painting, although I felt I was even then involved with imagery—even though I didn't understand the imagery completely myself, but I thought it was imagery, and for some reason that's not quite clear to me yet, and maybe I don't want to be clear about it either . . . I was forced and pushed into the kind of painting that I did. That is to say, the demands in this dialogue with myself—I give to it, I make some marks, it speaks to me, I speak to it, we have *terrible* arguments going on all night, weeks and weeks—do I really believe that? I make a mark, a few strokes. I argue with myself, not "do I like it or not," but, "is it true or not?" "Is that what I mean, is that what I want?"

QUESTION: When you're working and you see something that reminds you of a literal image, how does this affect you?

GUSTON: I tussle with these things all the time. A few years ago, like I do quite often, I got very nervous about what I was doing, maybe exhausted, and I came into the loft one day and I tacked up a canvas on the wall, I never paint on an easel, a very old loft full of dirty skylights and a lot of crap around, I thought, I'll just paint what I see, don't think. So I painted the whole loft, like one of those Matisses—easel, broken chairs, electrical wire hanging down, all the way right up to my hand below painting it. I worked steadily for eight hours without stopping. I ran across the street, got my wife. Look at that, I can paint. It's as good as a Bonnard. I was really upset. This denied everything I was doing. It's one of those funny moments you have, about five years ago. I'm puzzled all the time by representation or not, the literal image and the nonobjective, there's no such thing as nonobjective art. Everything has an object, has a figure. The question is what kind? Does it have illusions, in what way can you have figuration? In this case I painted, quite literally, with fancy colors, dirty grays, nice pinks, ochres. Looks terrific. I had a hard time sleeping that night. I was very upset; where do I go; is this a new career, or what? Am I changing; am I afraid to change? All these psychological problems. I came in the next morning and there was nothing there—literally nothing there. There was a representation of all this, but it seemed like a fake, faked up, because it didn't seem real. It didn't seem concrete. It didn't seem to have any life of its own. All it did was represent something, and depended on all this recognition, like you have to be briefed on it, like, oh, yes, a chair, a torn cloth, oh, yeah, a broken mirror. It was composed nicely; it flowed and moved through one part into the other, all around your eye moved nicely, absolutely satisfying as a painting. Well, then, naturally, I proceeded to destroy it. And then I had to rediscover again and again that, I guess, I'm not interested in painting; I'm not interested in making a picture. Then what the hell am I interested in? I must be interested in this process that I'm talking about. Sometimes a picture comes off, and I scrape off a lot. I don't keep the studio very tidy. You have on the floor, like cow dung in the field, this big glob of paint on the floor, and something comes off on the picture, and I look down at this stuff on the floor, and it's just a lot of inert *matter*, inert paint. Then what is it? I look back at the canvas, and it's not inert, it's active, moving, and living. And that to me seems like some kind of peculiar miracle that I need to have, again and again. Why I need this kind of miracle, I don't know, but I need it. My conviction is that this is the act of creation to me. That's how I have it. So, I'm in a corner with painting, and I can't seem to move out. I've done this, painting the studio, again and again. A few objects, paint cans on a table, recently, and it won't stay there. It won't stick there. Last year I got involved with a five and dime coffee cup, cheap coffee cups are kind of nice, that ear—looks so ordinary. Maybe I'll put in two to make it interesting. It won't stick; it won't hold on the plane. Then you start shoving this form around; it gets pushed around; it gets distorted, maybe one side goes up; one ear goes way out. It feels good. I don't know why. If you push it, it feels good. I don't know what it is. It must have something to do with kinesthesia.

I feel now that I'm painting; I'm not drawing anything, or even representing nonobjective art. You know, you can represent abstract art, too, as well as heads, figures, nudes. A lot of abstract artists are just representational painters, you know that. And a lot of figurative artists are very abstract. I don't feel as if I'm doing that. I feel more as if I'm shaping something with my hands. I feel as if I've always wanted to get to that state. Like a blind man in a dark room had some clay, what would he make? I end up with two or three forms on a canvas, but it gets very physical for me. I always thought, I'm a very spiritual man, not interested in paint, and now I discover myself to be very physical, and very involved with matter. I want to be involved with how heavy things are, a balloon, how light things are; things levitating, pushing forms, make me feel as if my hand is pushing in a head, bulges out here and pushes there. Like feelings you all have, you see someone's head, and you want to push it, squeeze it, see what happens . . . or gravity interests me. You might be able to write a whole book of philosophy about if you had a ball and the floor was just tilted a little bit, at what point would the ball start rolling. Sometimes a form on a canvas gets in some peculiar position, it's about to fall, but it isn't falling, because some little thing is holding it up, some peculiar balancing is going on. I'm very involved with all this foolishness. Of course, I believe it's very significant,

and not foolish at all. It becomes in my mind as important and as crucial as painting the baptism of Christ. I don't know why. It's very important to me. Maybe I'm skeptical about it all, too, because it's a terrible state for man to get down to, but then modern life is like that; when you walk down the street you have to keep your balance, how you walk. I can listen to a couple of guys, as I did the other day, having a heavy philosophical discussion about Sartre, and instead of listening to them, I was watching the way the guy was shifting, the way his pants sagged, and the way he shifted his weight on his hips. It seemed to be very important.

And then, almost without warning, there was the Marlborough exhibition of October 1970 with those strange subject paintings and drawings done within a two year period (1969–70) in which hooded Ku Klux Klan figures smoked cigars and drove around in convertible cars. They made reference back to the very early work, such as the lost painting *Conspirators*, c.1930, but there was a real difference. The hooded figures were humanized. Through the cartoon-like "Krazy Kat" rendering, and the depiction of figures involved in mundane, at-home activities, some of which were atrocious, these traditional symbols of evil became Everyman. And, there was Guston in his hood seated among them at an easel. Much of the painting was brilliant, but the commentary seemed profoundly sad. Was this to be a Beckett-like, existential end-game, or was it a vignette, a momentary lapse in Guston's struggles with abstraction? Only the work to follow would tell.

When I finally arrived at Guston's studio in 1978, there it was: the next body of work, painting, after painting, after painting. Whatever psychological dam had been blocking Guston's creative surge had burst. Self-revelatory, self-deprecatory, urgent, tormented, dumb, sad, humorous, anything and everything but pretty, the hand and heart were moving with a will of their own.

From the beginning of my knowledge of Guston I had been aware of his remarkable memory, his extraordinary capacity for recall. No matter where one dips into his life with questions, the answers are always there—when he did this or that, who was there when it happened, who said what. One has the strong feeling that as you push the button on this humanized computer, an hour or a day in his life floats up, complete with sounds, smells, sights, tastes, and, most of all, feelings. When I saw the new work I felt that I knew what had happened. Guston was finally revealing himself as what he is, the wandering Jewish intellectual carrying everything of value in his massive head. For a lifetime, the chains of knowing had entwined him like those of Marley's ghost in Dickens's *The Christmas Carol*. And now he was throwing them off.

As with Monet or Matisse in their senior years, the work just seemed to flow. No questioning of what to paint or how to paint it, the years of physical confrontation with paint and canvas, and the constant fretting about what is art had conditioned him. But, Guston is not Monet or Matisse; the inner torment of late paintings by Goya or Rembrandt come to mind.

These were the thoughts on my mind as we selected. We laid out one show, and then another, and then another. We smoked and drank and smelled fresh paint. We yelled. Slowly things began to fall into place for each of us, then for both of us. In one sense the artist had gotten his way; the weighing was heavily toward the new work which could not be denied. I had gotten my history and transitions, and the predictive drawings that seemed so necessary. We parted friends.

Audiences can now make their judgments about the new Guston, the old Guston, or the total Guston, but the work will continue. The jolt of understanding will be a heavy one for an art world conditioned by much of the other art of the 1960s and 70s, but it now seems clear, at least to me, that Guston, unlike many of his peers, was able to save the best until the last.

Notes

1. Harold Rosenberg, "Philip Guston's Object, A Dialogue with Harold Rosenberg," *Philip Guston, Recent Paintings and Drawings* (New York: The Jewish Museum, 1966), n. pag.
2. Philip Guston, "*Boston University Talk*" (Dialogue with Joseph Ablow, Boston University, 1966). These remarks were excerpted from the unedited transcript of the dialogue.

PLATES

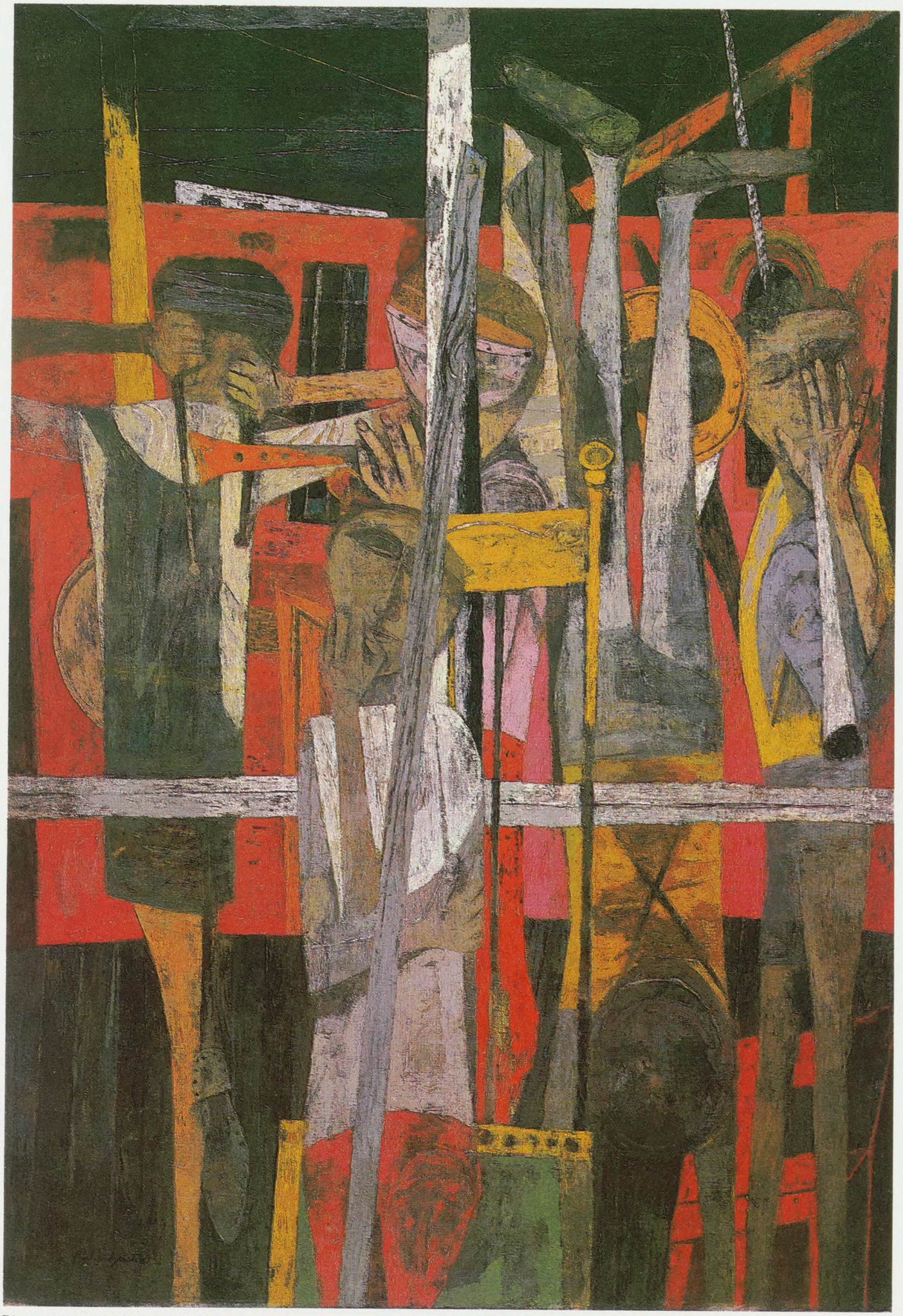
Pl. 1 MOTHER AND CHILD, c. 1930

Pl. 2 DRAWING FOR CONSPIRATORS, 1930

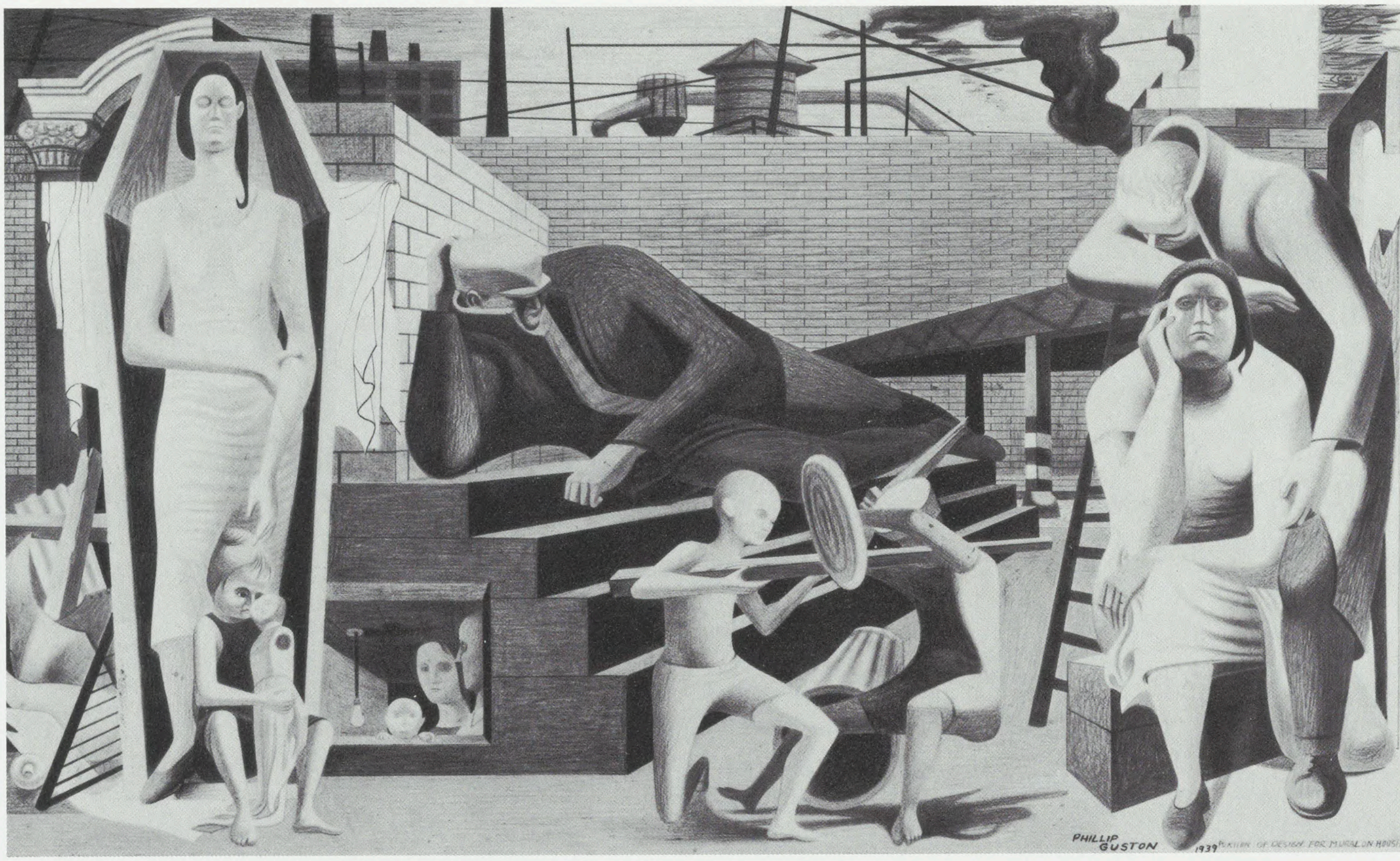
Pl. 3 MUSA, 1936

Pl. 4 STUDY FOR QUEENSBRIDGE HOUSING PROJECT MURAL, 1938

Pl. 5 IF THIS BE NOT I, 1945

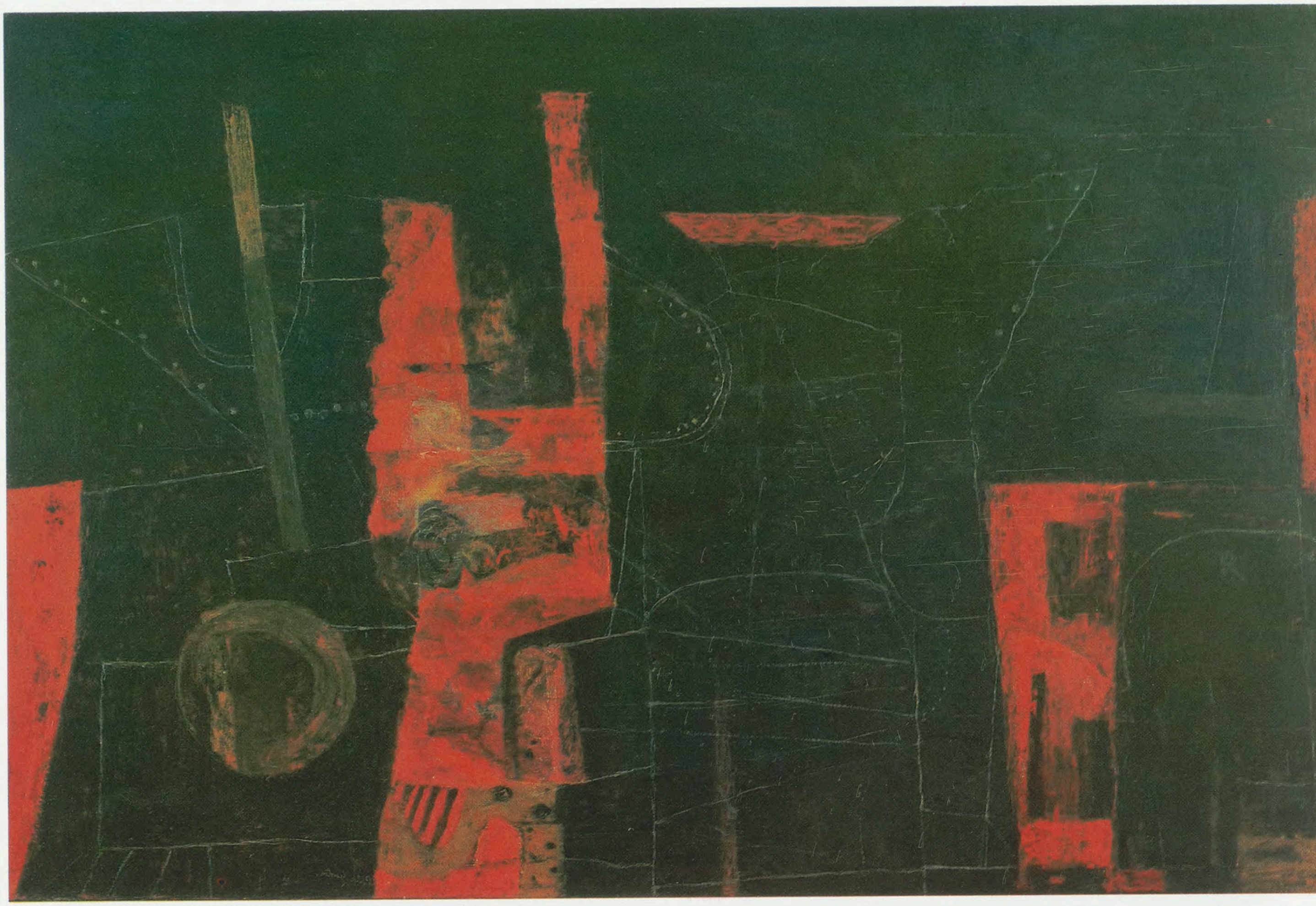


Pl. 6 PORCH NO. 2, 1947



Pl. 7 PORTION OF DESIGN FOR MURAL ON HOUSING, 1939

Pl. 8 MARTIAL MEMORY, 1941



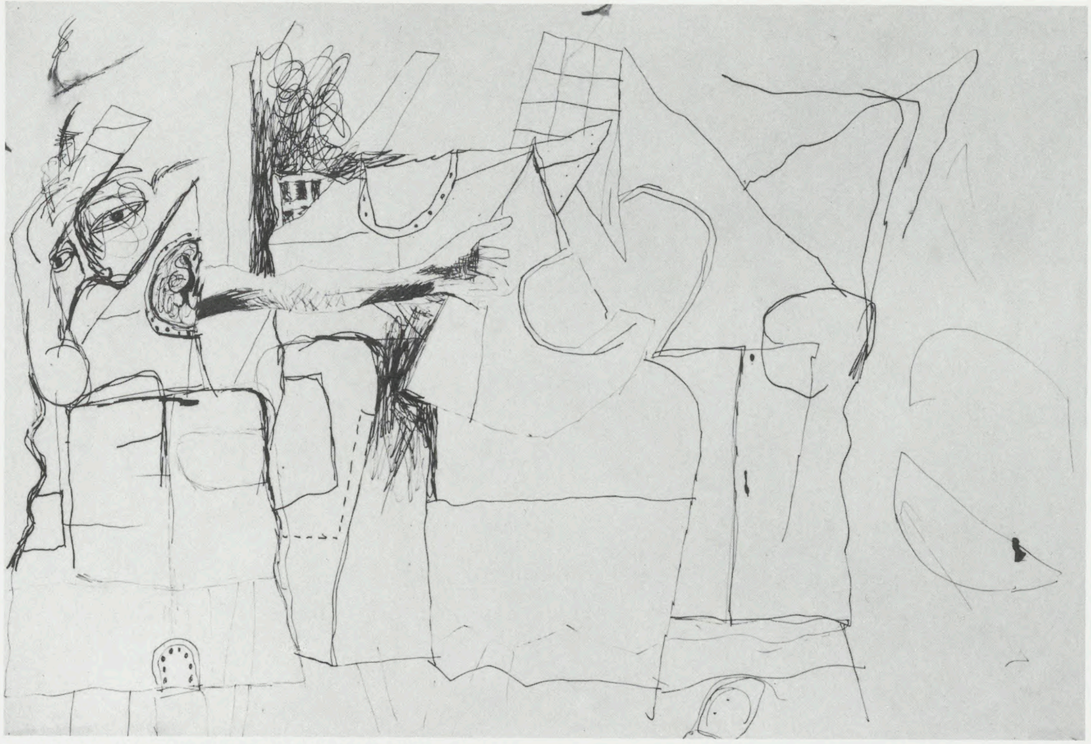
Pl. 9 THE TORMENTORS, 1947–48

Pl. 10 TO B.W.T., 1952

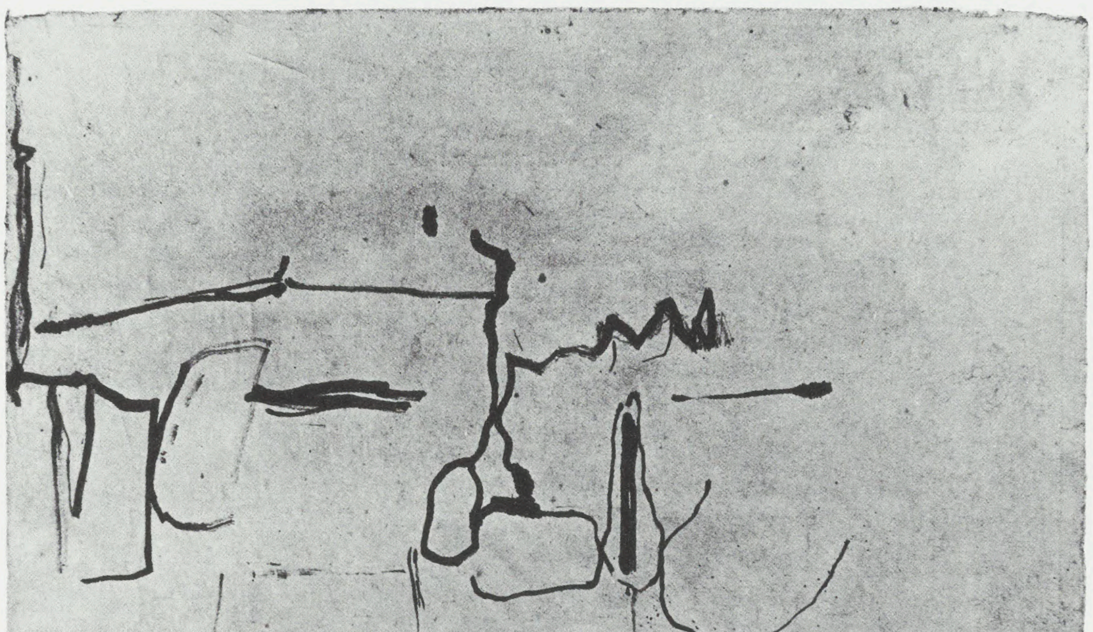
Pl. 11 ATTAR, 1953


Pl. 12 SKETCHBOOK, 1947


Pl. 13 ANGEL, 1947



Pl. 14 DRAWING NO. 1 (TORMENTORS), 1947



Pl. 15 SMALL QUILL DRAWING (formerly DRAWING NO. 6), 1950

Pl. 16 PAINTING, 1954

Pl. 17 BEGGAR'S JOYS, 1954–55

Pl. 18 RED PAINTING, 1950

Pl. 19 WHITE PAINTING I, 1951

Pl. 20 FOR M., 1955

Pl. 21 DRAWING NO. 14, 1953

Pl. 22 DIAL, 1956

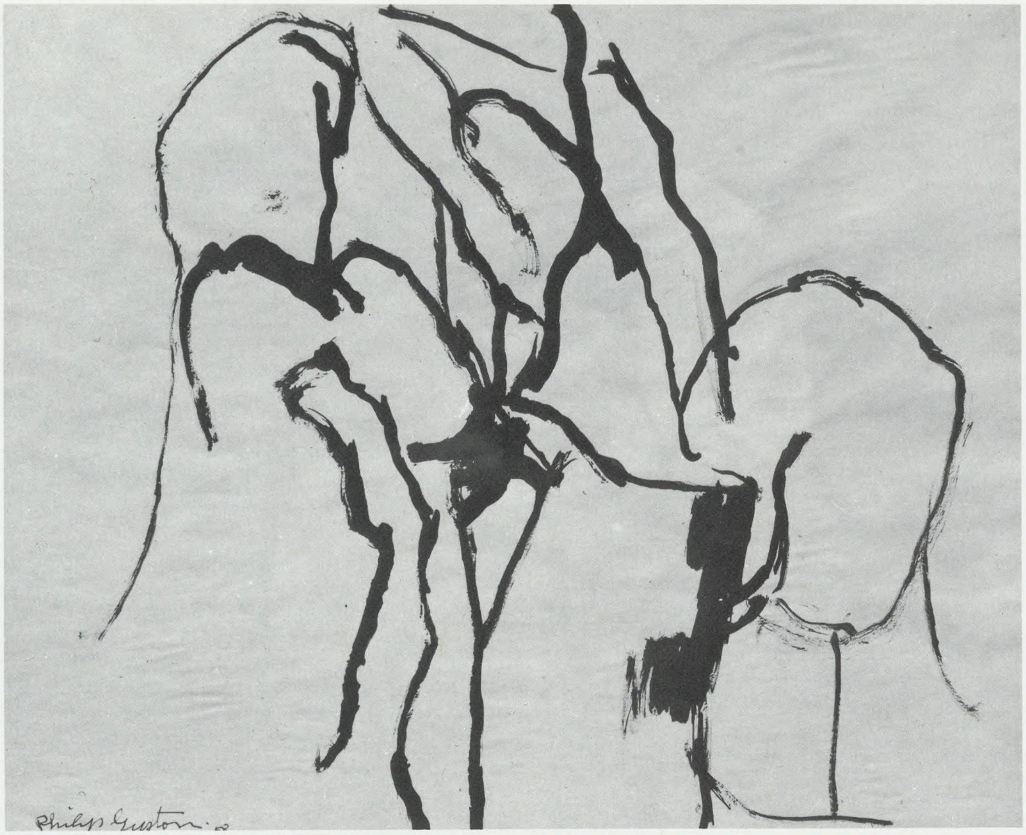
Pl. 23 FABLE, 1956–57

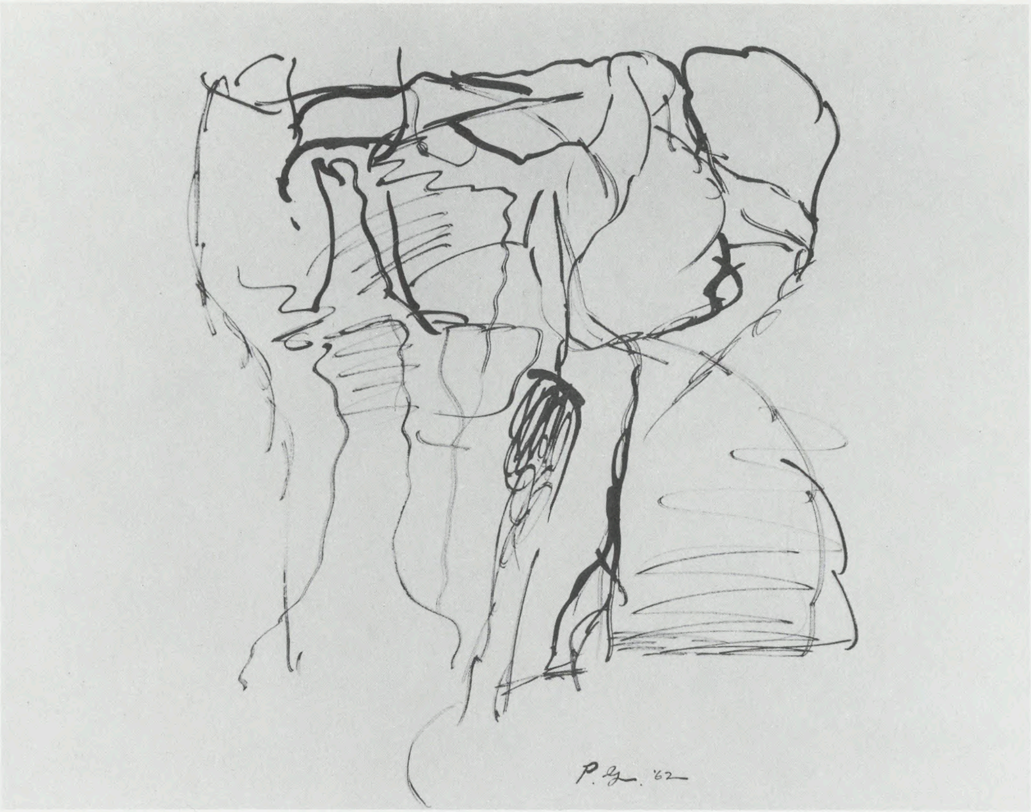
Pl. 24 EVIDENCE, 1957–58

Pl. 25 HEAD—DOUBLE VIEW (formerly DRAWING NO. 16 HEAD and DRAWING NO. 20), 1958

Pl. 26 THE MIRROR, 1957

Pl. 27 TO FELLINI, 1958


Pl. 28 FORMS IN CHANGE (formerly DRAWING NO. 21), 1958



Pl. 29 PETALS (formerly DRAWING NO. 31), 1962

Pl. 30 UNTITLED, 1958

Pl. 31 PAINTER, 1959

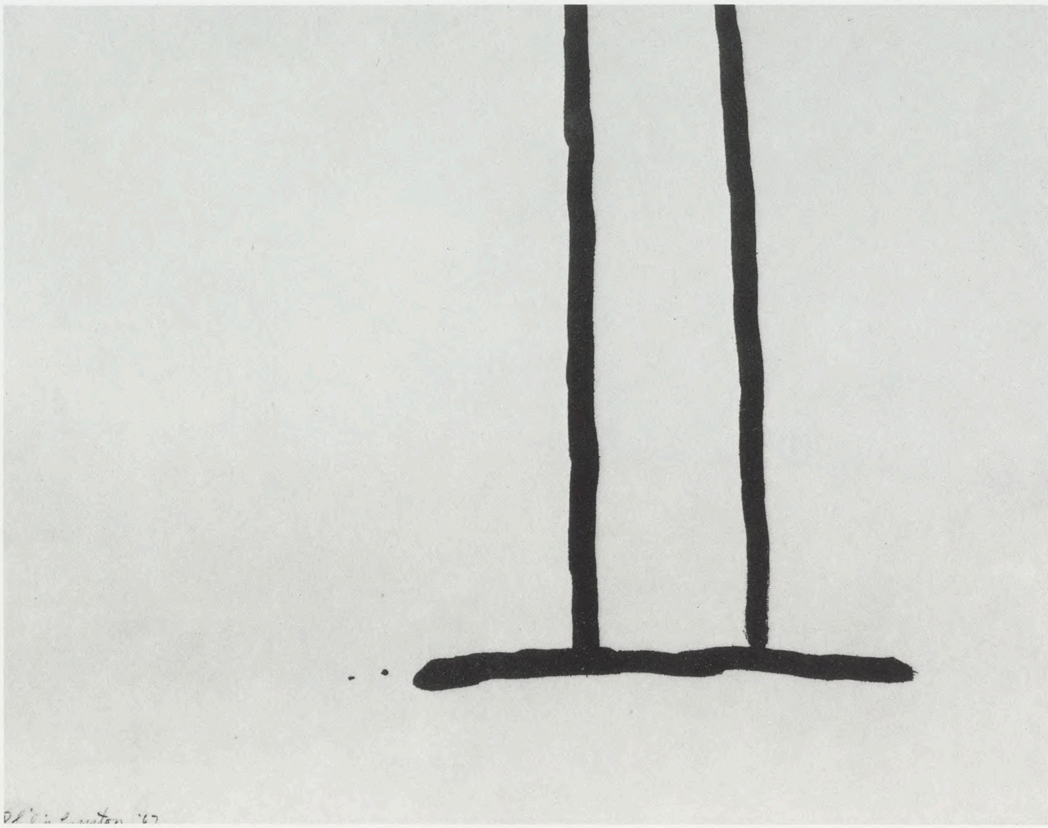
Pl. 32 THE LIGHT, 1964


Pl. 33 INHABITER, 1965

Pl. 34 CLOSE-UP III, 1961

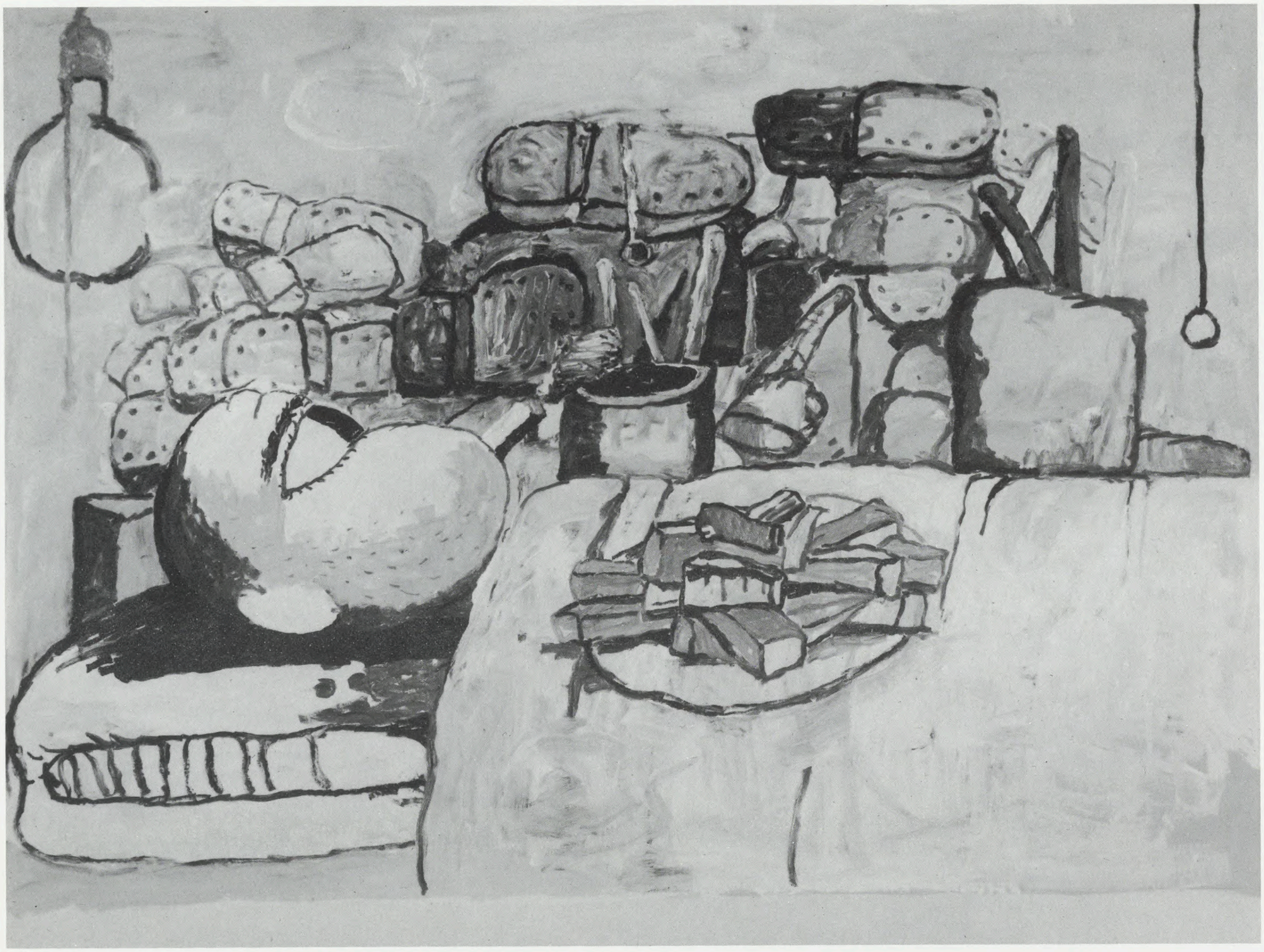
Pl. 35 NEW PLACE, 1964

Pl. 36 LOADED BRUSH, 1966

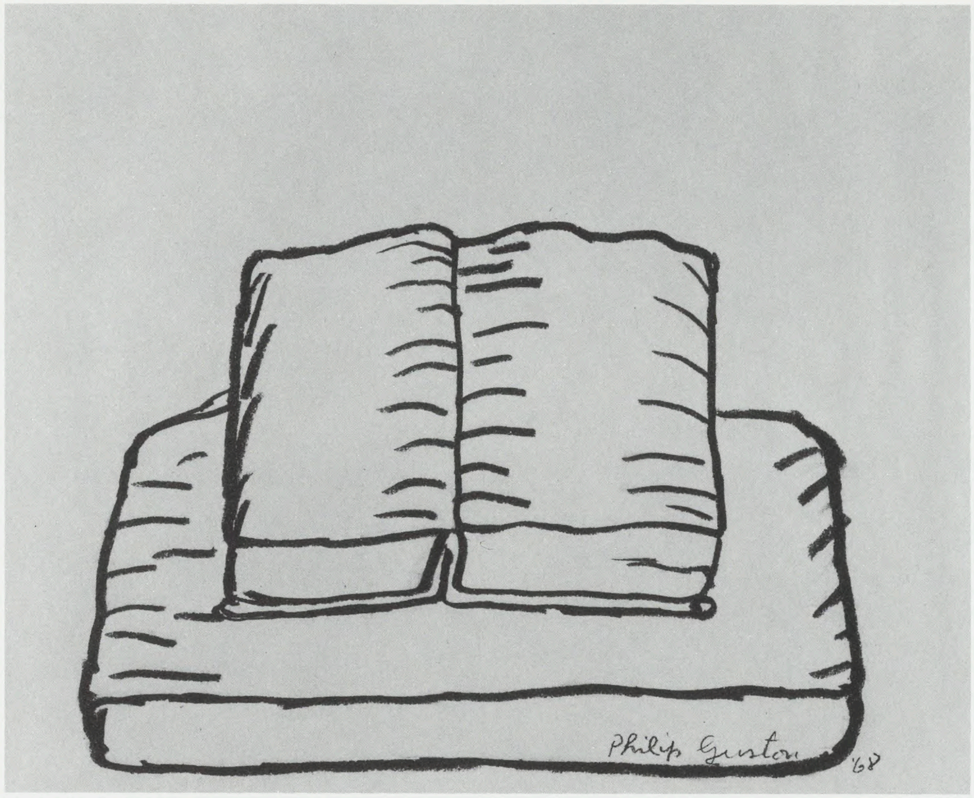


Pl. 37 OFF CENTER, 1967

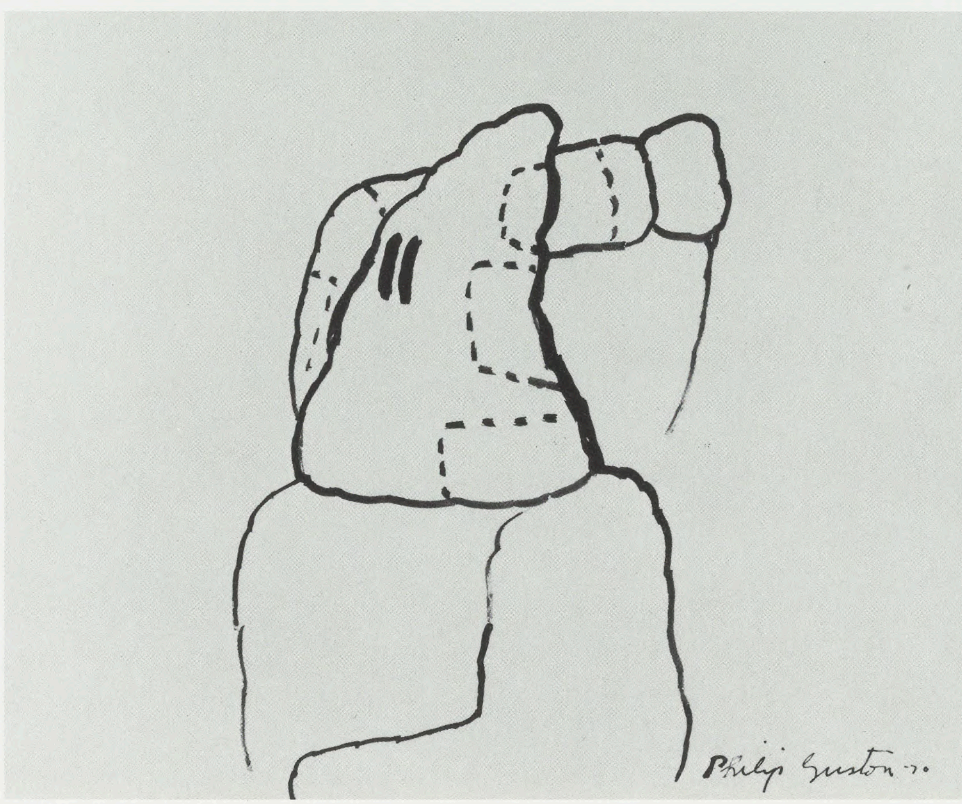
Pl. 38 THE THREE, 1964



Pl. 39 PAINTING, SMOKING, EATING, 1973



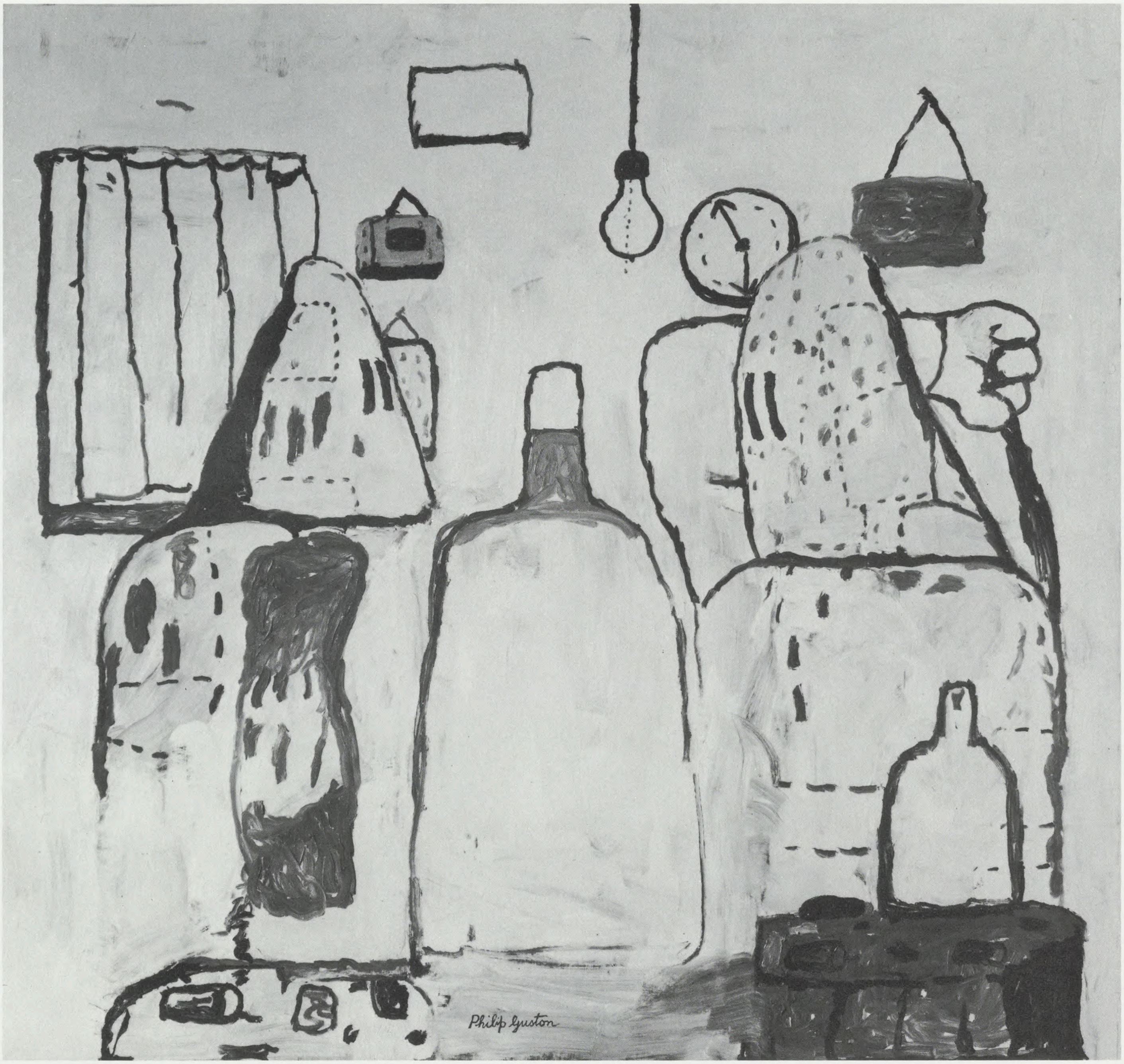
Pl. 40 BOOK, 1968



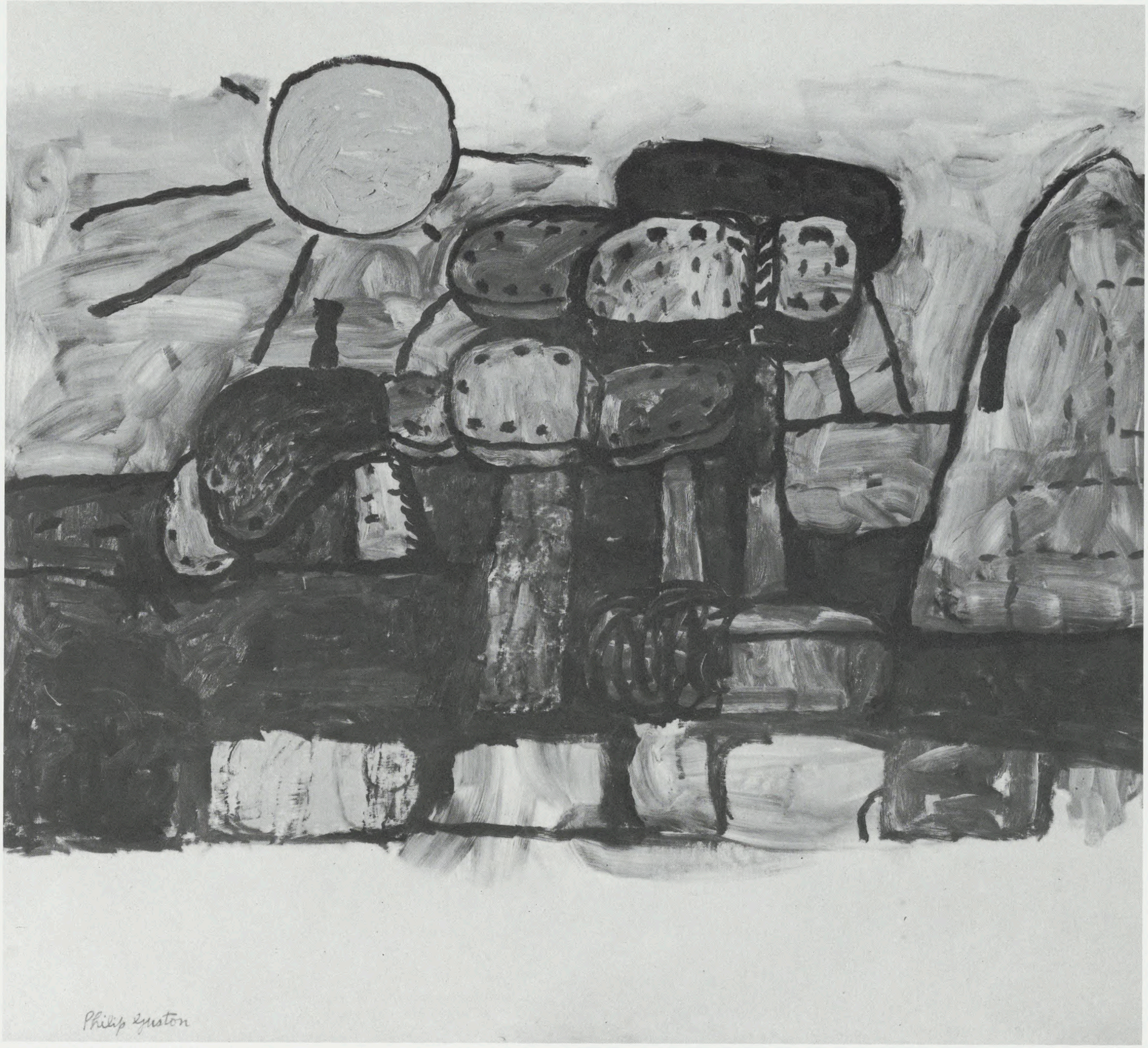
Pl. 41 THE WHIP, 1970

Pl. 42 EDGE OF TOWN, 1969

Pl. 43 THE STUDIO, 1969

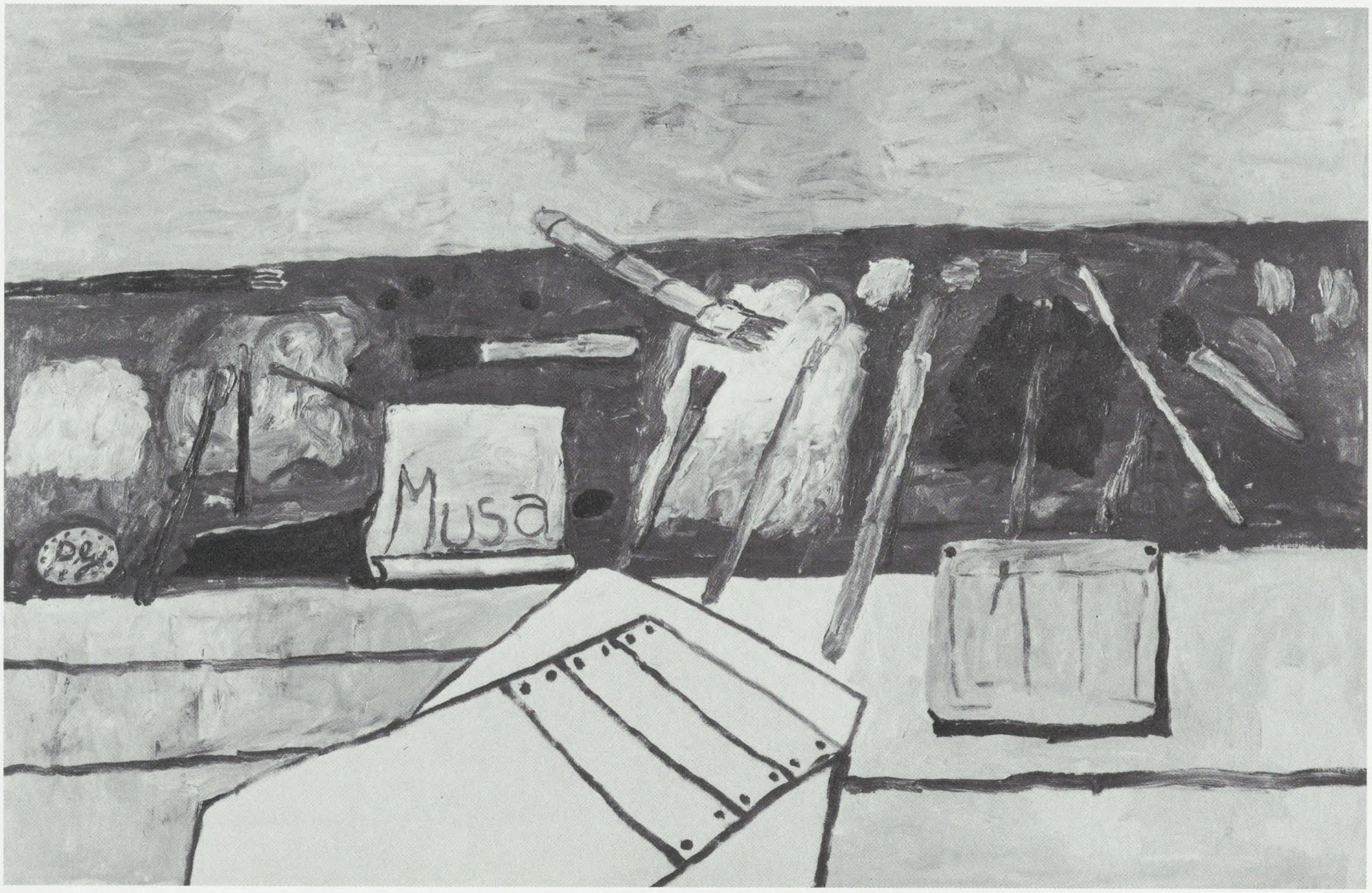


Pl. 44 BAD HABITS, 1970

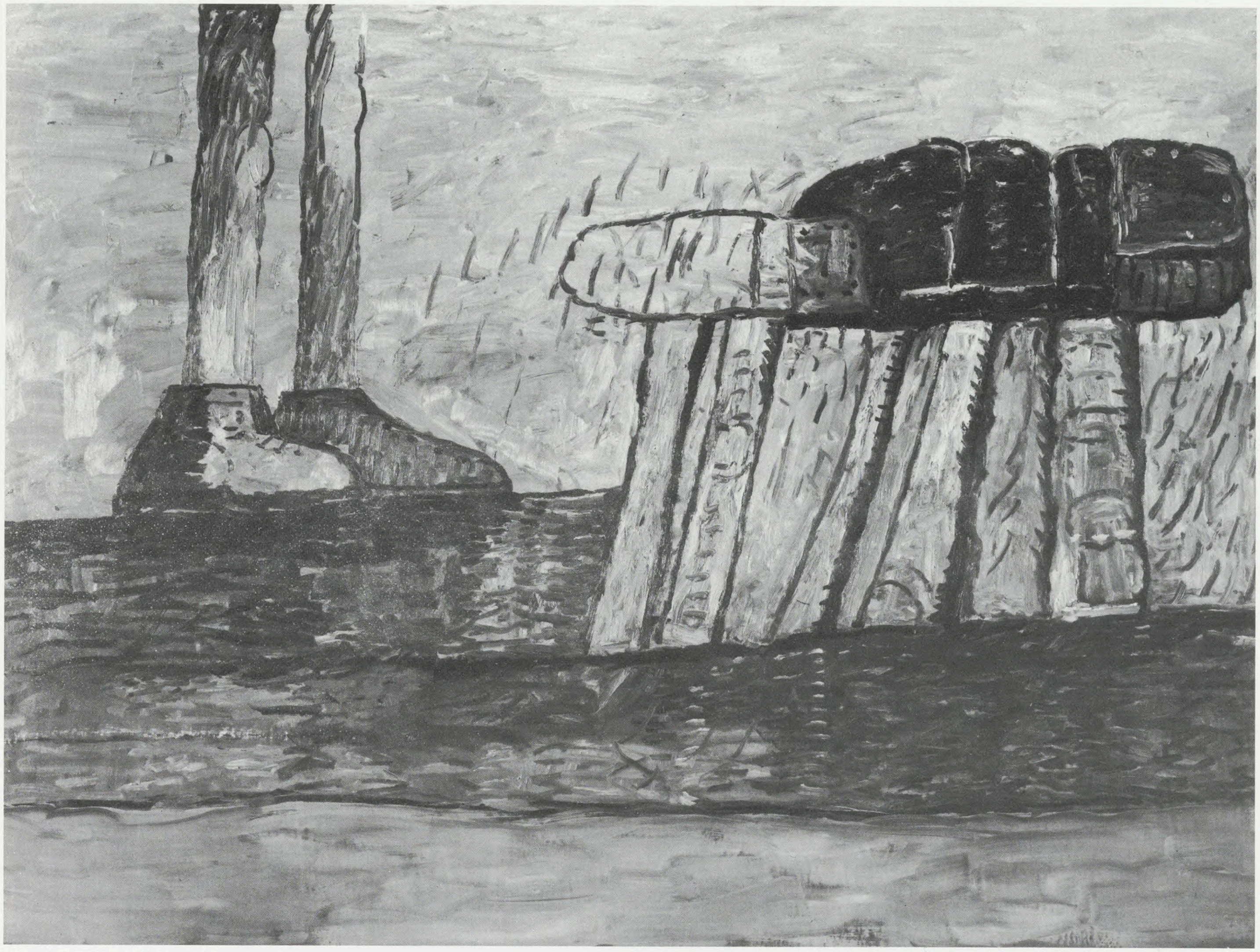

Pl. 45 OMINOUS LAND, 1972

Pl. 46 FLATLANDS, 1970

Pl. 47 CELLAR, 1970



Pl. 48 THE PALETTE, 1975

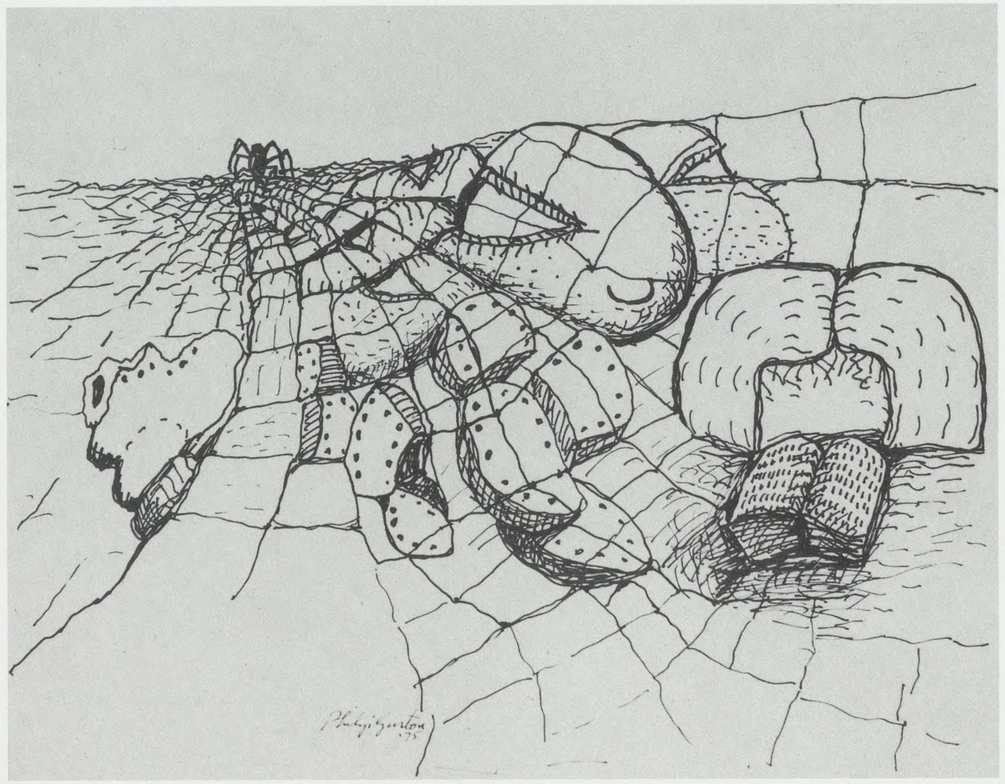


Pl. 49 LOWER LEVEL, 1975

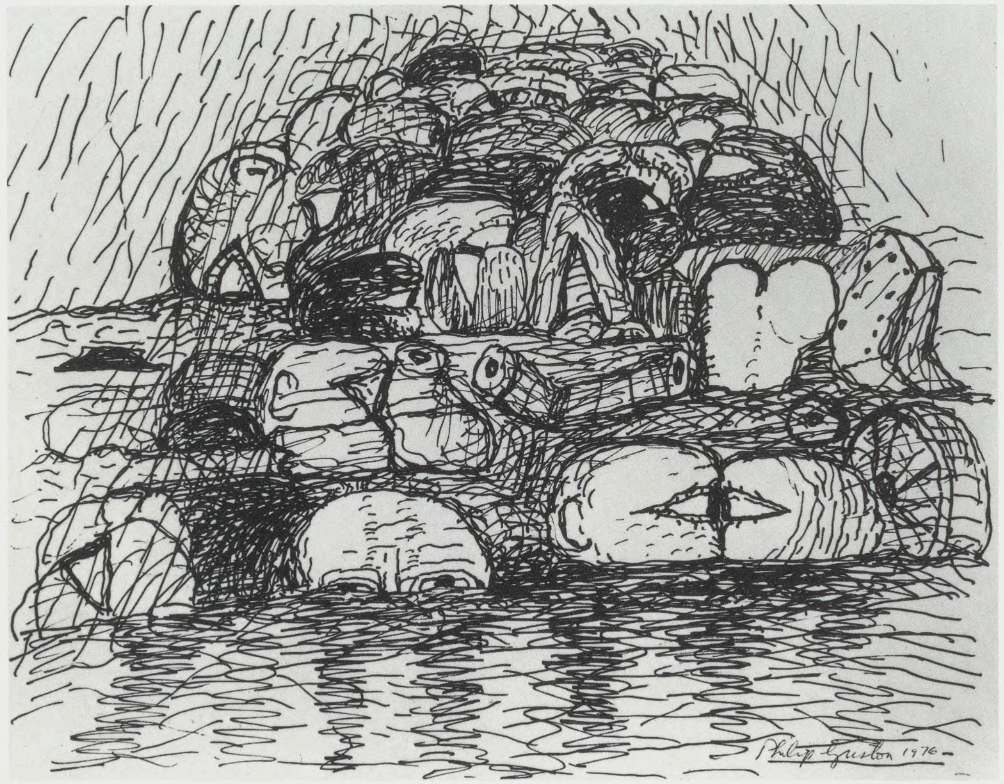
Pl. 50a RED SEA, 1975

Pl. 50b THE SWELL, 1975

Pl. 50c BLUE LIGHT, 1975

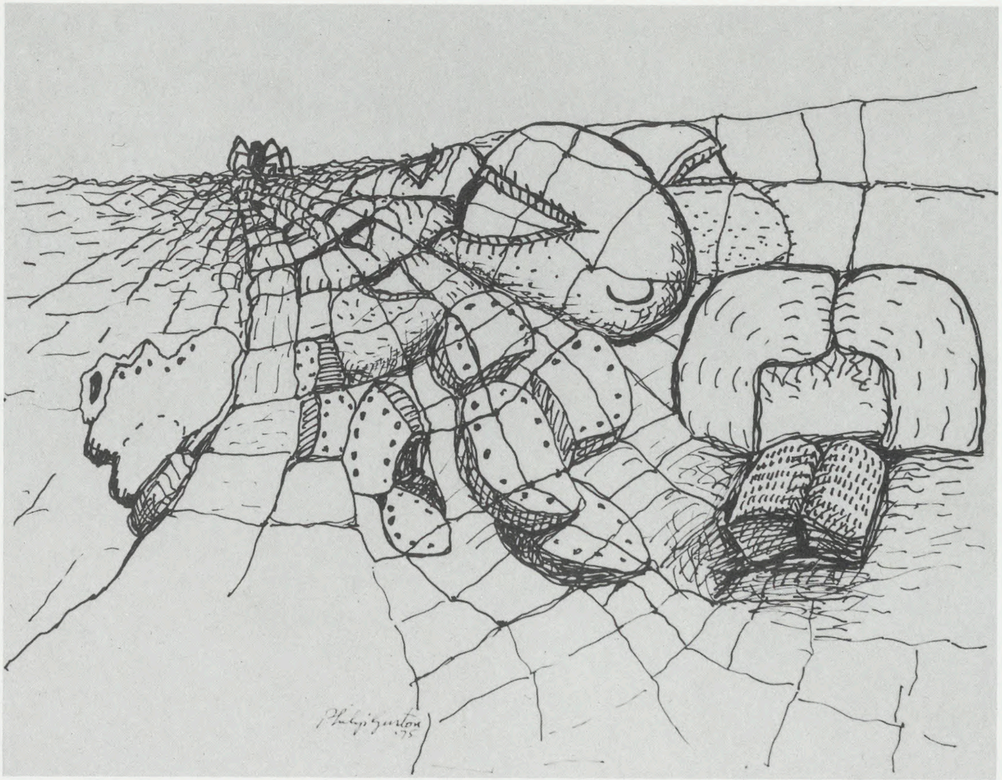


Pl. 51 WEB, 1975

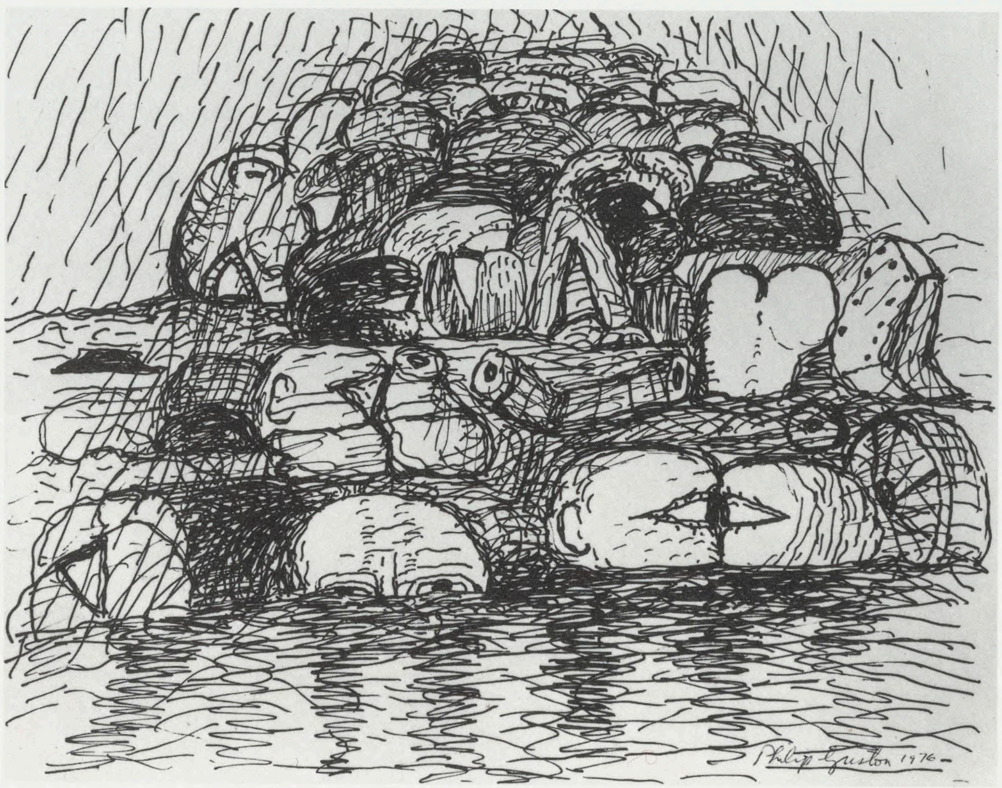


Pl. 52 LOWER LEVEL, 1976

Pl. 53 DELUGE II, 1975



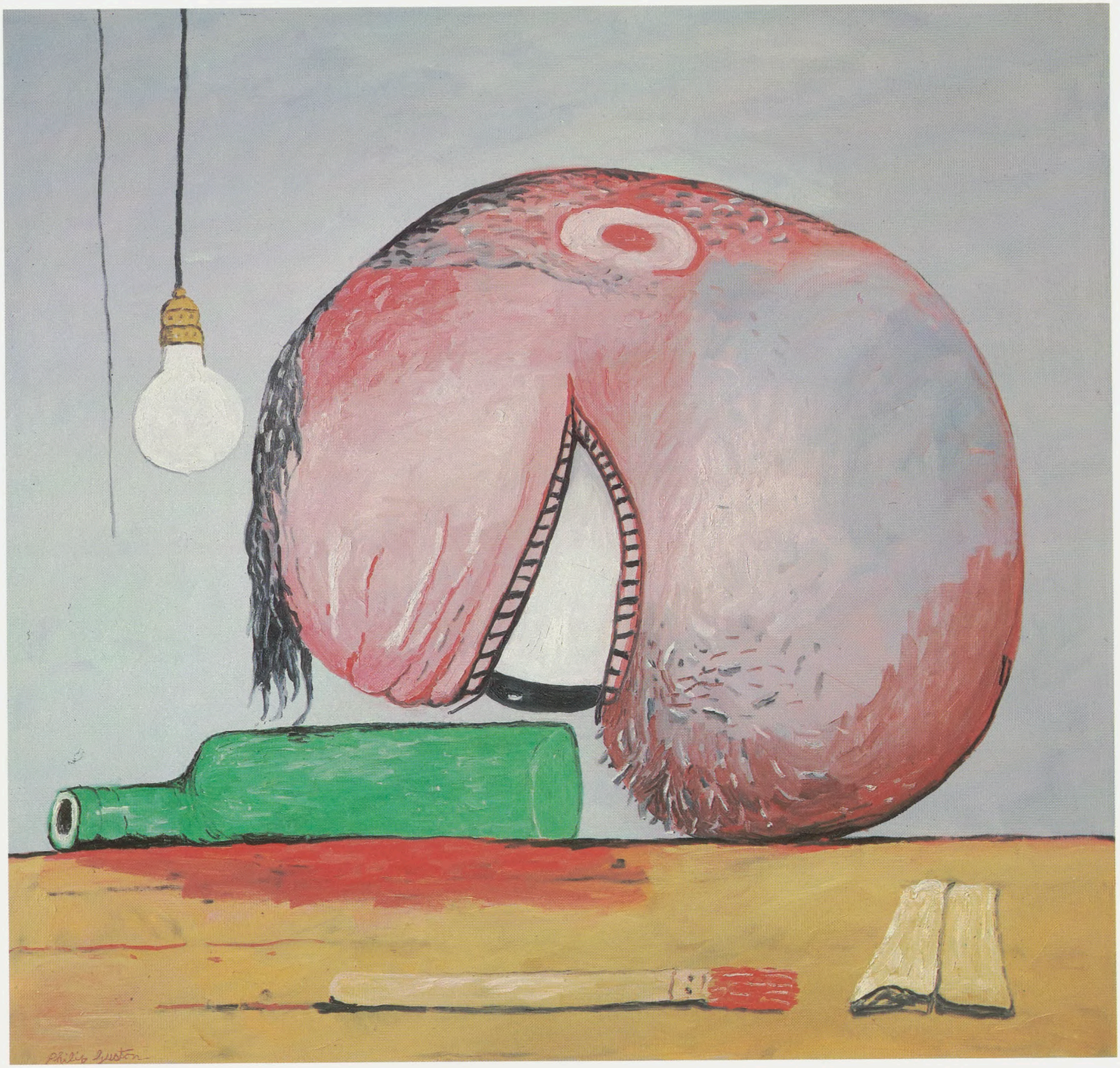
Pl. 51 WEB, 1975



Pl. 52 LOWER LEVEL, 1976

Pl. 53 DELUGE II, 1975

Pl. 54 WEB, 1975



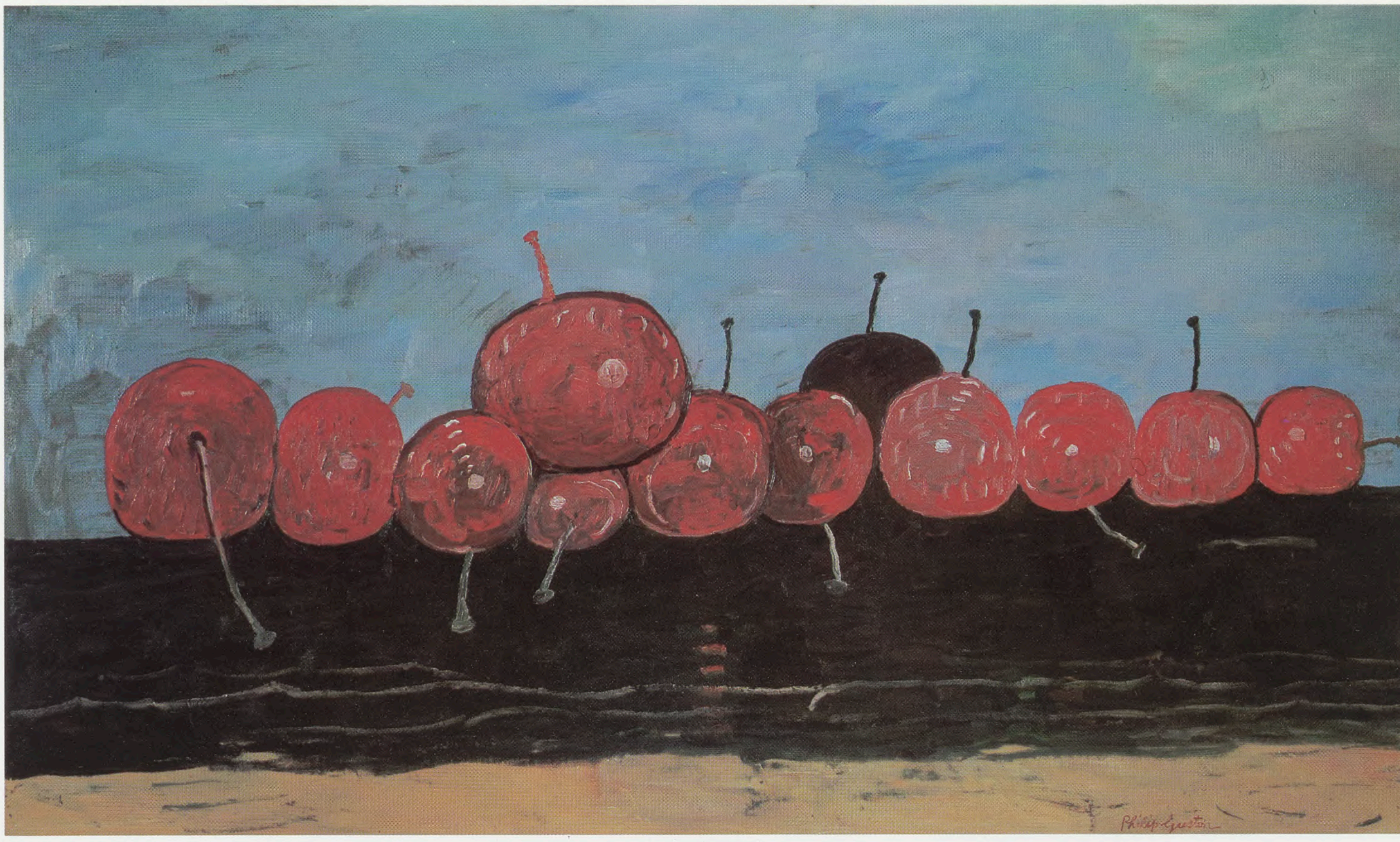
Pl. 55 HEAD AND BOTTLE, 1975

Pl. 56 WHARF, 1976

Pl. 57 THE FLOOR, 1976

Pl. 58 PIT, 1976

Pl. 59 SOURCE, 1976



Pl. 60 CHERRIES, 1976

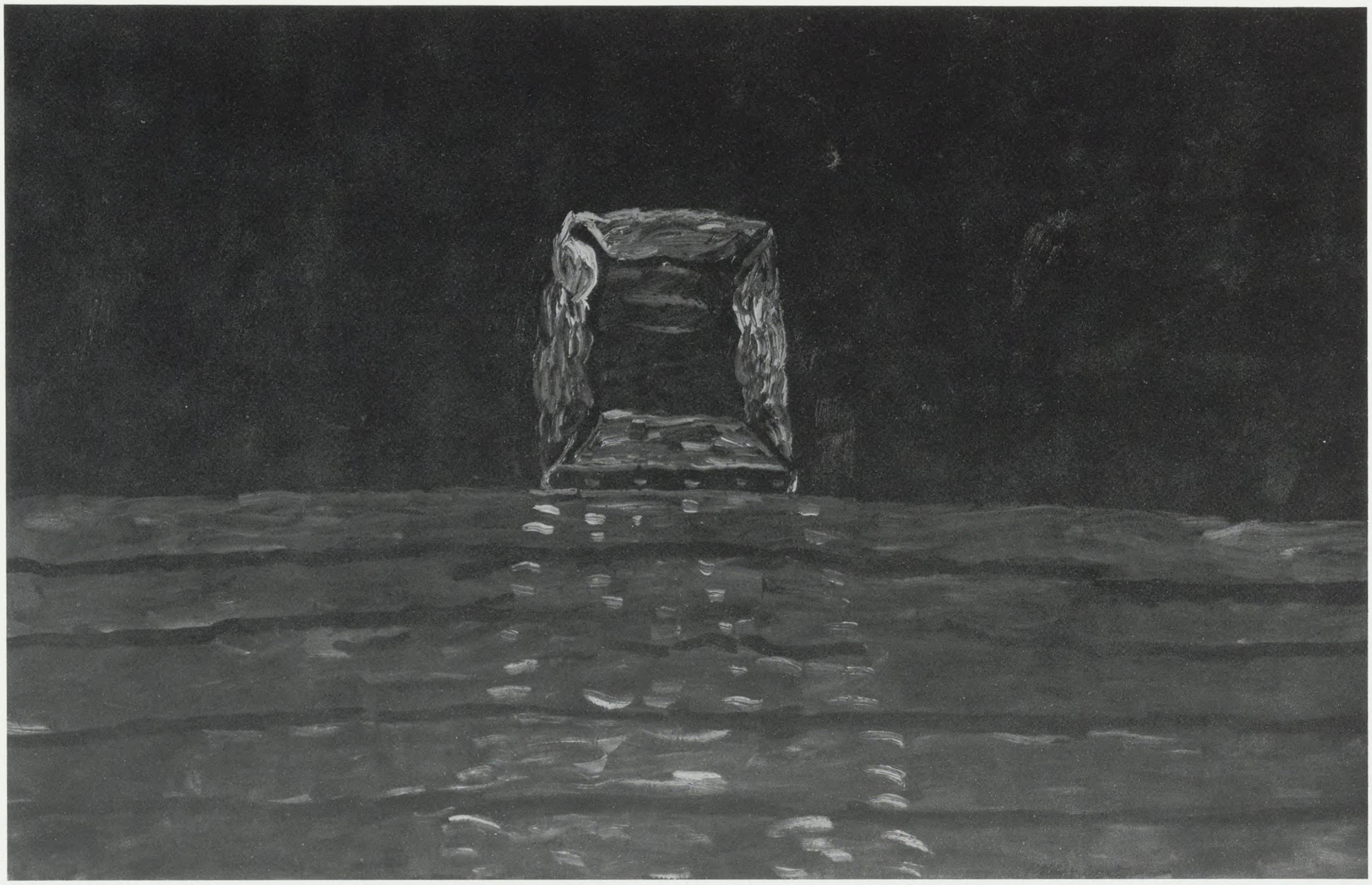
Pl. 61 MONUMENT, 1976

Pl. 62 RUG, 1976

Pl. 63 BACK VIEW, 1977

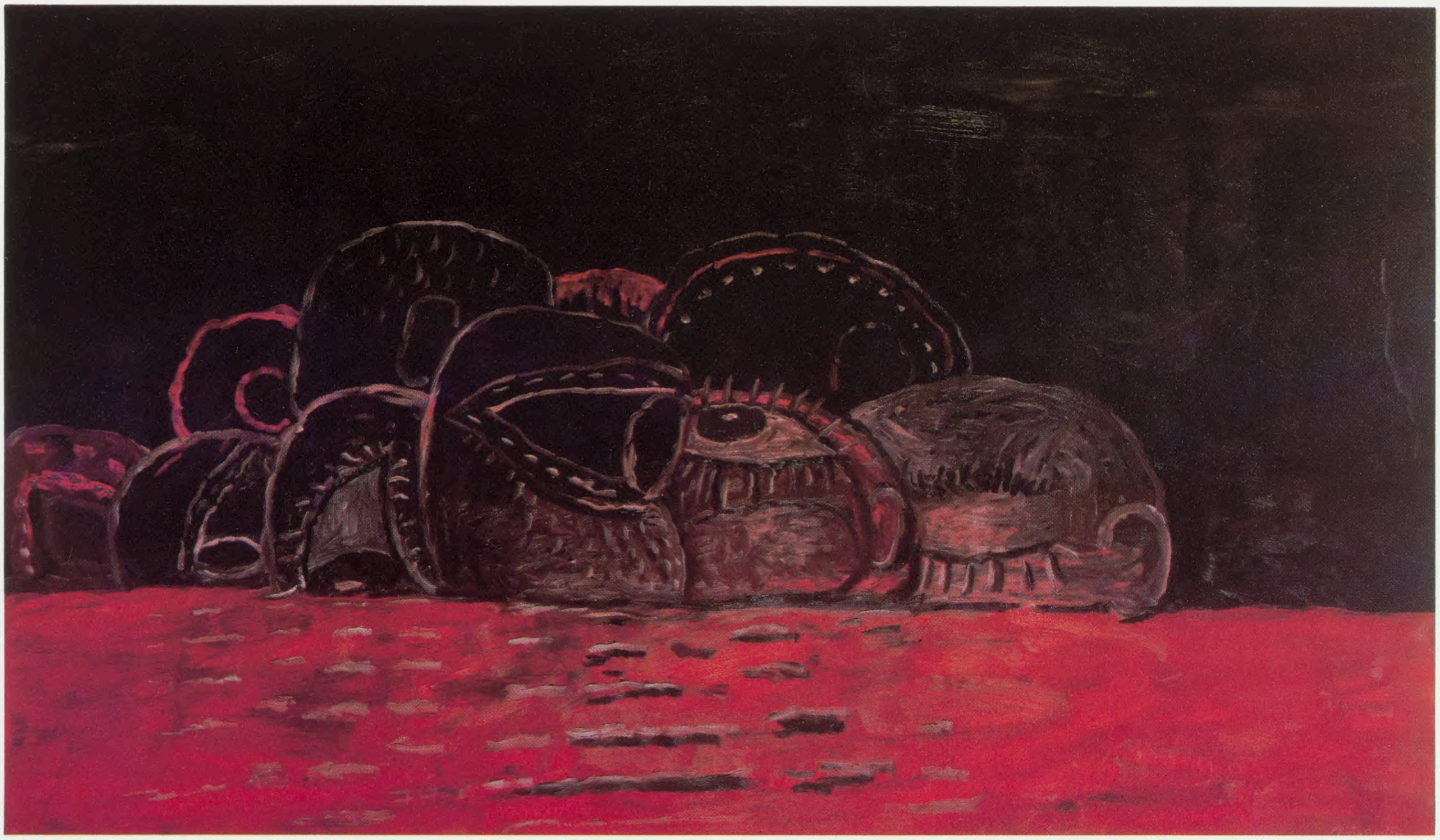
Pl. 64 THE COAT II, 1977

Pl. 65 THE COAT, 1977



Pl. 66 FRAME, 1976

Pl. 67 DARK ROOM, 1978



Pl. 68 CABAL, 1977

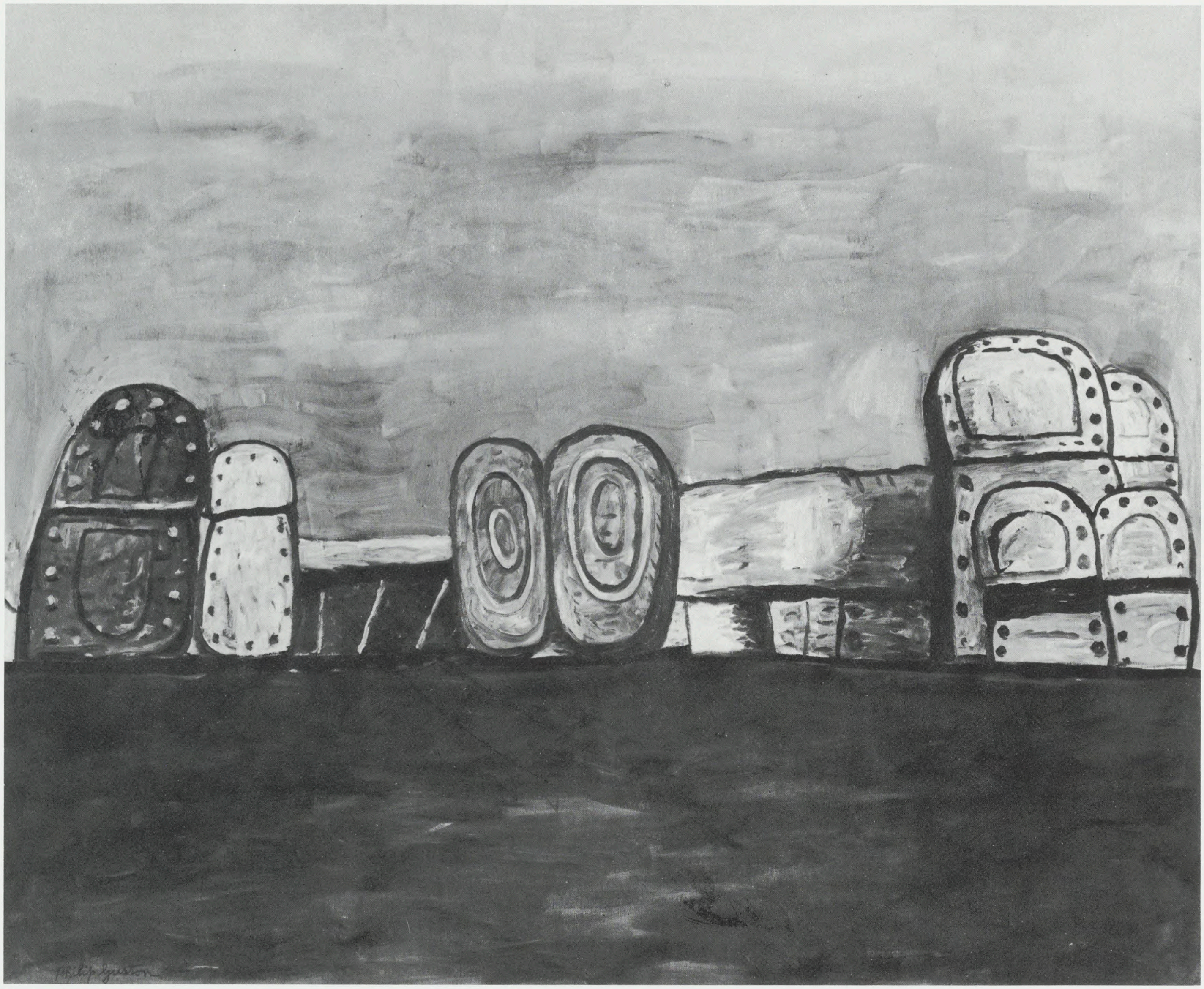
Pl. 69 PYRAMID AND SHOE, 1977

Pl. 70 RED BLANKET, 1977

Pl. 71 STEPPES, 1978

Pl. 72 BLACK SEA, 1977

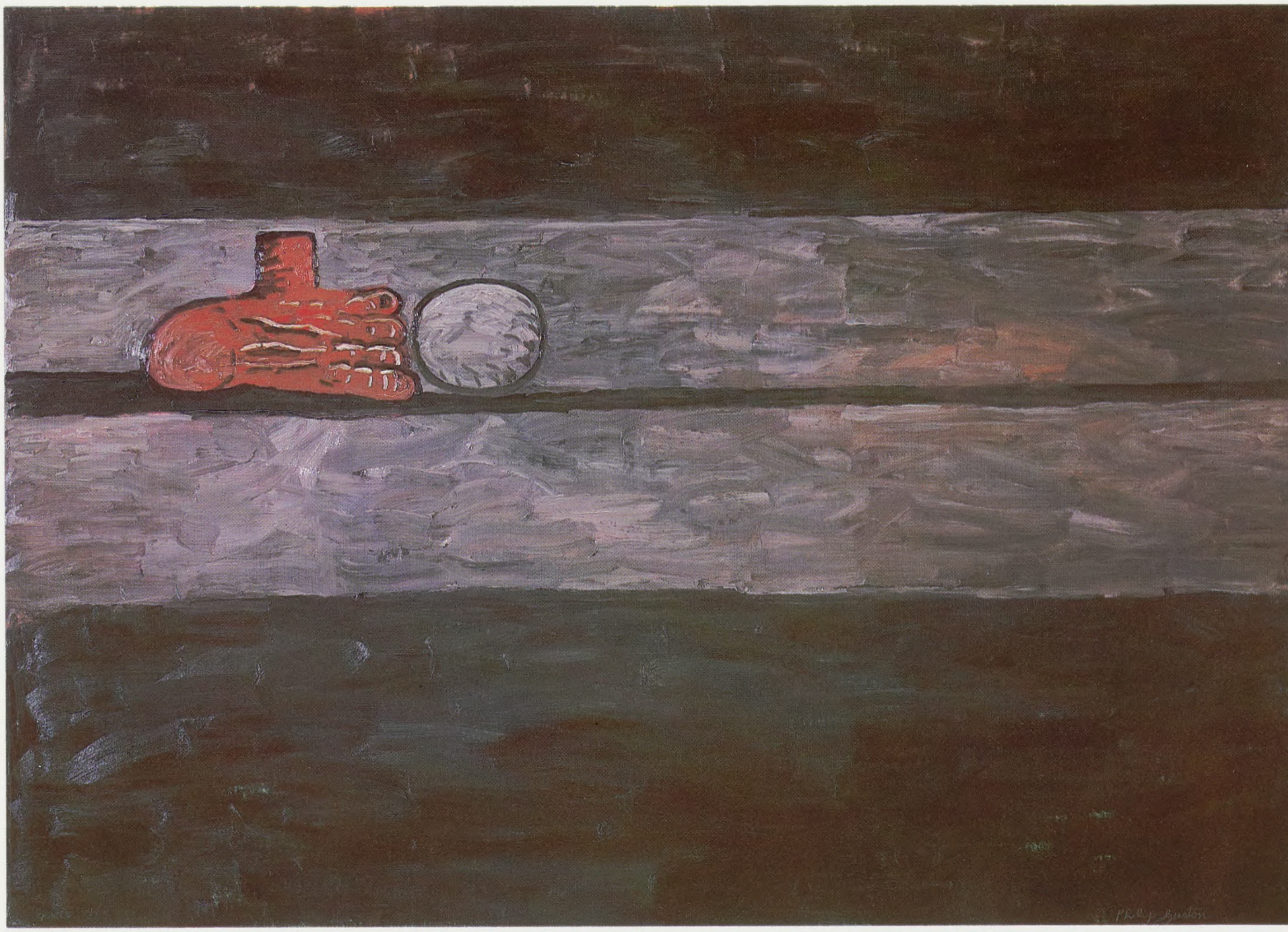
Pl. 73 THE STREET, 1977



Pl. 74 ORDERS, 1978

Pl. 75 PAINTER'S FORMS II, 1978


Pl. 76 POISED, 1978



Pl. 77 TRACK, 1978

Pl. 78 RAVINE, 1979

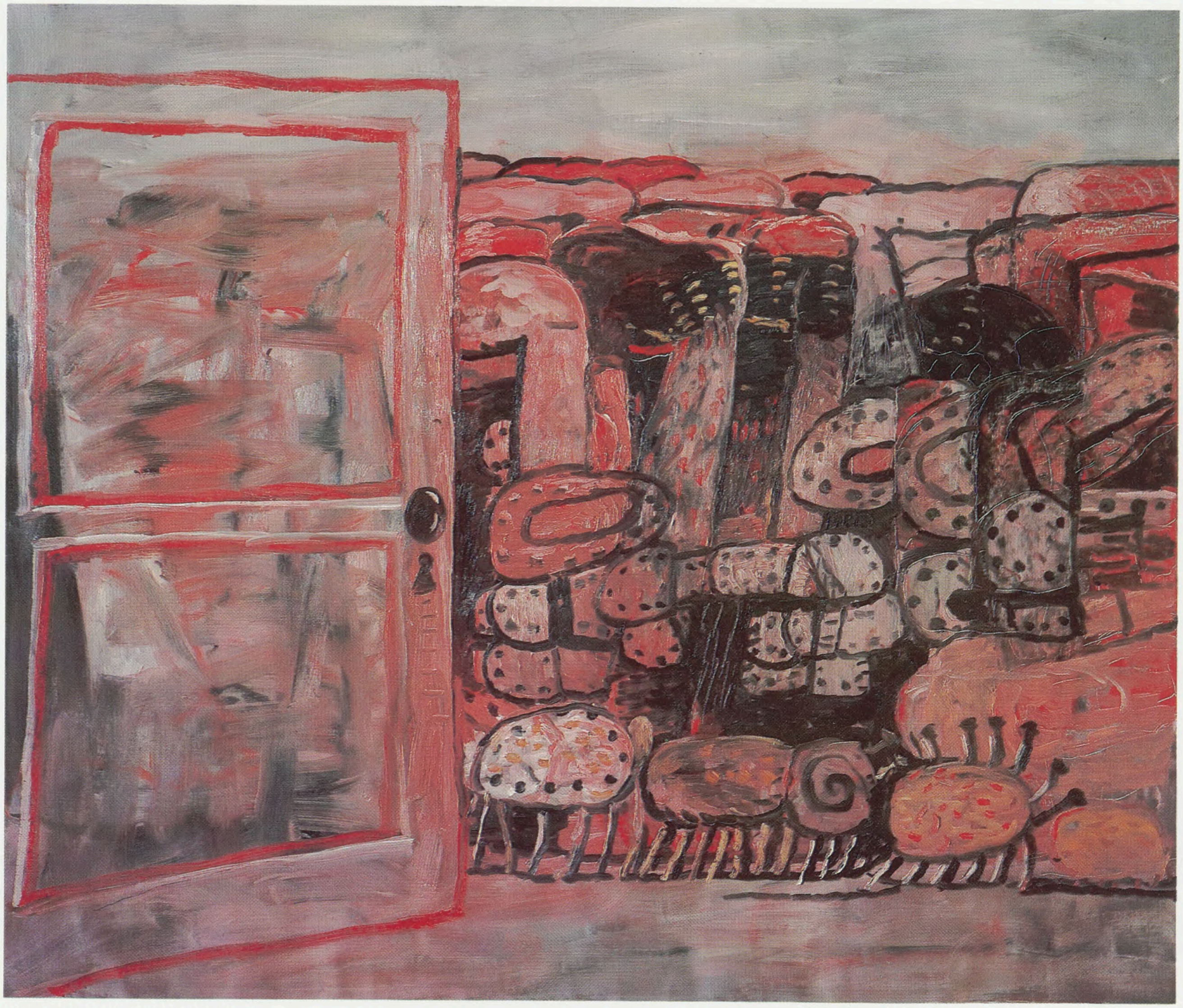
Pl. 79 SMOKE, 1978

Pl. 80 FRIEND—TO M.F., 1978

Pl. 81 THE LADDER, 1978

Pl. 82 PULL, 1979

Pl. 83 PLAIN, 1979



Pl. 84 ENTRANCE, 1979

Pl. 85 MOON, 1979

Pl. 86 WHEEL, 1979

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

In the listing of dimensions, height precedes width; centimeter measurements are enclosed in parentheses. Works are listed chronologically, and by order of execution within the year. Titles, dates and measurements have been provided by the owners or custodians of the works. Figures preceding title refer to exhibition number.

1. MOTHER AND CHILD, c.1930 [Pl. 1]
   Oil on canvas, 40 x 30″ (101.6 x 76.2)
   Collection of the artist

2. DRAWING FOR CONSPIRATORS, 1930 [Pl. 2]
   Pencil on paper, 22½ x 14½″ (57.2 x 36.8)
   Collection of the artist

3. MUSA, 1936 [Pl. 3]
   Pencil on paper, 13⅜ x 9½″ (34.0 x 24.1)
   Collection of the artist

4. STUDY FOR QUEENSBRIDGE HOUSING PROJECT MURAL, 1938 [Pl. 4]
   Conté crayon on paper, 16 x 13″ (40.6 x 33.0)
   Collection of the artist

5. PORTION OF DESIGN FOR MURAL ON HOUSING, 1939 [Pl. 7]
   Colored pencil on paper, 15 x 24¾″ (38.1 x 62.9)
   Collection of the artist

6. MARTIAL MEMORY, 1941 [Pl. 8]
   Oil on canvas, 40⅛ x 32¼″ (101.9 x 81.9)
   Collection of The St. Louis Art Museum, Missouri; Eliza McMillan Trust Fund Purchase

7. IF THIS BE NOT I, 1945 [Pl. 5]
   Oil on canvas, 42⅜ x 55¼″ (107.6 x 140.3)
   Collection of the Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis, Missouri

8. THE PORCH, 1945
   Oil on canvas, 56⅛ x 34″ (142.6 x 86.4)
   Collection of the Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

9. PORCH NO. 2, 1947 [Pl. 6]
   Oil on canvas, 62½ x 43⅛″ (158.8 x 109.5)
   Collection of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York

10. SKETCHBOOK, 1947 [Pl. 12]
    Ink on paper, 22½ x 29″ (57.6 x 73.7) (irregular)
    Collection of the artist

11. ANGEL, 1947 [Pl. 13]
    Ink on paper, 17½ x 23½″ (44.5 x 59.7)
    Collection of the artist

12. DRAWING NO. 1 (TORMENTORS), 1947 [Pl. 14]
    Ink on paper, 15 x 22⅛″ (38.1 x 56.2)
    Collection of the artist

13. THE TORMENTORS, 1947–48 [Pl. 9]
    Oil on canvas, 40⅞ x 60½″ (103.8 x 153.7)
    Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Promised gift of the artist

14. DRAWING NO. 2 (ISCHIA), 1949
    Ink on paper, 11 x 15″ (27.9 x 38.1)
    Collection of the artist

15. DRAWING NO. 4, 1950
    Ink on rice paper, 24½ x 38⅞″ (62.2 x 98.7)
    Collection of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

16. SMALL QUILL DRAWING (formerly DRAWING NO. 6), 1950 [Pl. 15]
    Ink on rice paper, 15¼ x 19¼″ (38.7 x 48.9)
    Collection of the artist

17. RED PAINTING, 1950 [Pl. 18]
    Oil on canvas, 34 x 62⅛″ (86.4 x 157.8)
    Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Promised gift of the artist

18. AUTUMN (formerly DRAWING NO. 18), 1950
    Ink on paper, 16½ x 22″ (41.9 x 55.9)
    Collection of Leonard and Stephanie Bernheim, New York

19. WHITE PAINTING I, 1951 [Pl. 19]
    Oil on canvas, 57⅞ x 61⅞″ (147.0 x 157.2)
    Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; T. B. Walker Foundation Fund Purchase

20. TO B. W. T., 1952 [Pl. 10]
    Oil on canvas, 48½ x 51½″ (123.2 x 130.8)
    Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Richard E. Lang, Medina, Washington

21. NO. 9, 1952
    Oil on canvas, 48⅛ x 60¼″ (122.2 x 153.0)
    Private Collection

22. DRAWING NO. 14, 1953 [Pl. 21]
    Ink on paper, 17½ x 22⅜″ (44.5 x 56.8)
    Collection of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

23. ATTAR, 1953 [Pl. 11]
    Oil on canvas, 48½ x 46″ (123.2 x 116.8)
    Collection of Gerald Elliott, Chicago

24. PAINTING, 1954 [Pl. 16]
    Oil on canvas, 63¼ x 60⅛″ (160.7 x 152.7)
    Collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Gift of Philip C. Johnson, 1956

25. BEGGAR'S JOYS, 1954–55 [Pl. 17]
Oil on canvas, 71⅞ x 68⅛″ (182.6 x 173.0)
Collection of Sophie and Boris Leavitt, Hanover, Pennsylvania

26. FOR M., 1955 [Pl. 20]
Oil on canvas, 76⅜ x 72¼″ (194.0 x 183.5)
Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Gift of Mrs. Betty Freeman

27. DIAL, 1956 [Pl. 22]
Oil on canvas, 72 x 76″ (182.9 x 193.0)
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

28. FABLE, 1956–57 [Pl. 23]
Oil on canvas, 65 x 76″ (165.1 x 193.0)
Collection of the Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis, Missouri

29. THE MIRROR, 1957 [Pl. 26]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 62″ (172.7 x 157.5)
Collection of the Joseph H. Hazen Foundation, Inc., New York. Used by permission.
© 1980 by the Joseph H. Hazen Foundation, Inc.

30. EVIDENCE, 1957–58 [Pl. 24]
Oil on canvas, 71 x 74″ (180.3 x 188.0)
Collection of Mrs. Paul Wattis, San Francisco

31. TO FELLINI, 1958 [Pl. 27]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 74″ (175.3 x 188.0)
Collection of Richard Manoogian, Grosse Pointe

32. HEAD—DOUBLE VIEW (formerly DRAWING NO. 16 HEAD and DRAWING NO. 20), 1958 [Pl. 25]
Ink on paper, 20 x 24⅞″ (50.8 x 63.2)
Collection of the artist

33. FORMS IN CHANGE (formerly DRAWING NO. 21), 1958 [Pl. 28]
Ink on paper, 18 x 23¾″ (45.7 x 60.3)
Collection of Richard and Roselyne Swig, San Francisco

34. UNTITLED, 1958 [Pl. 30]
Oil on canvas, 64 x 75⅛″ (162.6 x 190.8)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

35. PAINTER, 1959 [Pl. 31]
Oil on canvas, 65 x 69″ (165.1 x 175.3)
Collection of The High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; Museum purchase with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, 1974

36. CLOSE-UP III, 1961 [Pl. 34]
Oil on canvas, 70 x 72″ (177.8 x 182.9)
Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of Lee V. Eastman, 1972

37. PETALS (formerly DRAWING NO. 31), 1962 [Pl. 29]
Ink on paper, 17½ x 23¼″ (44.5 x 59.1)
Collection of the artist

38. THE LIGHT, 1964 [Pl. 32]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 79″ (172.7 x 200.7)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

39. NEW PLACE, 1964 [Pl. 35]
Oil on canvas, 76 x 80″ (193.0 x 203.2)
Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Promised gift of the artist

40. THE THREE, 1964 [Pl. 38]
Oil on canvas, 80 x 91″ (203.2 x 231.1)
Collection of the artist

41. INHABITER, 1965 [Pl. 33]
Oil on canvas, 76 x 79″ (193.0 x 200.7)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

42. THE SCALE, 1965
Ink on paper, 18¼ x 24¼″ (46.4 x 61.6)
Collection of the artist

43. LOADED BRUSH, 1966 [Pl. 36]
Ink on paper, 17½ x 22⅝″ (44.5 x 57.5)
Collection of the artist

44. FORM, 1967
Ink on paper, 19 x 22⅞″ (48.3 x 58.1)
Collection of the artist

45. OFF CENTER, 1967 [Pl. 37]
Ink on paper, 17¾ x 23″ (45.1 x 58.4)
Collection of the artist

46. BOOK, 1968 [Pl. 40]
Charcoal on paper, 17½ x 22½″ (44.5 x 57.2)
Collection of the artist

47. BRUSHES IN CAN, 1969
Charcoal on paper, 15¾ x 19¾″ (40.0 x 50.2)
Collection of the artist

48. MEETING, 1969
Acrylic on masonite, 30 x 32″ (76.2 x 81.3)
Collection of the artist

49. EDGE OF TOWN, 1969 [Pl. 42]
Oil on canvas, 77 x 110¼″ (195.6 x 280.0)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

50. THE STUDIO, 1969 [Pl. 43]
Oil on canvas, 48 x 42″ (121.9 x 106.7)
Collection of the artist

51. THE WHIP, 1970 [Pl. 41]
Ink on paper, 17 x 18″ (43.2 x 45.7)
Collection of the artist

52. DRIVE, 1970
Ink on paper, 17¼ x 23½″ (43.8 x 59.7)
Collection of the artist

53. BAD HABITS, 1970 [Pl. 44]
Oil on canvas, 73 x 78″ (185.4 x 198.1)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

54. FLATLANDS, 1970 [Pl. 46]
Oil on canvas, 70 x 114½″ (177.8 x 290.8)
Collection of Byron Meyer, San Francisco

55. CELLAR, 1970 [Pl. 47]
Oil on canvas, 78 x 110″ (198.1 x 279.4)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

56. OMINOUS LAND, 1972 [Pl. 45]
Oil on canvas, 72 x 81″ (182.9 x 205.7)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

57. PAINTING, SMOKING, EATING, 1973 [Pl. 39]
Oil on canvas, 77½ x 103½″ (196.9 x 262.9)
Collection of the artist

58. THE PALETTE, 1975 [Pl. 48]
Oil on canvas, 52 x 79½″ (132.1 x 201.9)
Collection of the artist

59. LOWER LEVEL, 1975 [Pl. 49]
Oil on canvas, 74 x 98½″ (188.0 x 250.2)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

60. DELUGE II, 1975 [Pl. 53]
Oil on canvas, 79¼ x 111″ (201.9 x 281.4)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

61. RED SEA, THE SWELL, BLUE LIGHT, 1975
(triptych) [Pl. 50a, 50b, 50c]
Oil on canvas, respectively: 73½ x 78¾″ (186.7 x 200.1); 73 x 78⅛″ (185.5 x 198.5); 73 x 80½″ (185.5 x 204.5); overall: 73 x 237″ (185.5 x 602.0)
Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Purchased through The Helen Crocker Russell and William H. and Ethel W. Crocker Family Funds, the Mrs. Ferdinand C. Smith Fund, and the Paul Wattis Special Fund

62. WEB, 1975 [Pl. 51]
Ink on paper, 19 x 24″ (48.3 x 61.0)
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Anderson, Atherton, California

63. WEB, 1975 [Pl. 54]
Oil on canvas, 67 x 97¼″ (170.2 x 247.0)
Private Collection

64. HEAD AND BOTTLE, 1975 [Pl. 55]
Oil on canvas, 65½ x 68½″ (166.4 x 174.0)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

65. LOWER LEVEL, 1976 [Pl. 52]
Ink on paper, 19 x 24″ (48.3 x 61.0)
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ascher, New York

66. WHARF, 1976 [Pl. 56]
Oil on canvas, 80 x 116″ (203.2 x 294.6)
Collection of Gerald Elliott, Chicago

67. THE FLOOR, 1976 [Pl. 57]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 98″ (175.3 x 248.9)
Collection of the artist

68. RUG, 1976 [Pl. 62]
Oil on canvas, 80 x 110″ (203.2 x 279.4)
Private Collection

69. PIT, 1976 [Pl. 58]
Oil on canvas, 75 x 116″ (190.5 x 294.6)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

70. SOURCE, 1976 [Pl. 59]
Oil on canvas, 76 x 117″ (193.0 x 297.2)
Private Collection

71. FRAME, 1976 [Pl. 66]
Oil on canvas, 74 x 116″ (188.0 x 294.6)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

72. CHERRIES, 1976 [Pl. 60]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 116″ (175.3 x 294.6)
Private Collection

73. MONUMENT, 1976 [Pl. 61]
Oil on canvas, 80 x 110″ (203.2 x 279.4)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

74. GREEN RUG, 1976 [cover]
Oil on canvas, 94 x 68½″ (238.8 x 174.0)
Private Collection

75. RED BLANKET, 1977 [Pl. 70]
Oil on canvas, 68½ x 90″ (174.0 x 228.6)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

76. BACK VIEW, 1977 [Pl. 63]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 94″ (175.3 x 238.8)
Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Promised gift of the artist

77. THE COAT II, 1977 [Pl. 64]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 92″ (175.3 x 233.7)
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Anderson, Atherton, California

78. THE COAT, 1977 [Pl. 65]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 79″ (172.7 x 200.7)
Private Collection, New York

79. CABAL, 1977 [Pl. 68]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 116″ (172.7 x 294.6)
Lent by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Promised 50th Anniversary Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Learsy

80. PYRAMID AND SHOE, 1977 [Pl. 69]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 116″ (172.7 x 294.6)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

81. LAMP, BLACK SEA, 1977
Pencil on paper, 13½ x 16½″ (34.3 x 41.9)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

82. BLACK SEA, 1977 [Pl. 72]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 117″ (172.7 x 297.2)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

83. THE STREET, 1977 [Pl. 73]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 110¾″ (175.3 x 281.3)
Collection of the HHK Foundation for Contemporary Art, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

84. STEPPES, 1978 [Pl. 71]
Oil on canvas, 68⅛ x 88⅜″ (173.0 x 224.5)
Collection of the artist

85. ORDERS, 1978 [Pl. 74]
Oil on canvas, 78½ x 96½″ (199.4 x 245.1)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

86. PAINTER'S FORMS II, 1978 [Pl. 75]
Oil on canvas, 75 x 108″ (190.5 x 274.3)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

87. POISED, 1978 [Pl. 76]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 81″ (172.7 x 205.7)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

88. TRACK, 1978 [Pl. 77]
Oil on canvas, 78 x 109″ (198.1 x 276.9)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

89. DARK ROOM, 1978 [Pl. 67]
Oil on canvas, 68¼ x 80⅛″ (173.4 x 203.5)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

90. SMOKE, 1978 [Pl. 79]
Oil on canvas, 68⅛ x 80⅛″ (173.0 x 203.5)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

91. FRIEND—TO M. F., 1978 [Pl. 80]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 88″ (172.7 x 223.5)
Collection of Doris and Charles Saatchi, London

92. THE LADDER, 1978 [Pl. 81]
Oil on canvas, 70 x 108″ (177.8 x 274.3)
Private Collection

93. PULL, 1979 [Pl. 82]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 100″ (172.7 x 254.0)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

94. PLAIN, 1979 [Pl. 83]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 93″ (175.3 x 236.2)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

95. ENTRANCE, 1979 [Pl. 84]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 80″ (172.7 x 203.2)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

96. RAVINE, 1979 [Pl. 78]
Oil on canvas, 68 x 80″ (172.7 x 203.2)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

97. MOON, 1979 [Pl. 85]
Oil on canvas, 69 x 80″ (175.3 x 203.2)
Courtesy of the David McKee Gallery, New York

98. WHEEL, 1979 [Pl. 86]
Oil on canvas, 48 x 60″ (121.9 x 152.4)
Private Collection

BIOGRAPHY OF EXHIBITIONS

Compiled by Louise E. Katzman

An * indicates, according to our research, that documentation for this exhibition is unavailable.

ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS

1931 Stanley Rose Gallery, Los Angeles, 1931.*

1944 *Paintings and Drawings by Philip Guston*, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1944. Catalog published.

1945 *Philip Guston*, Midtown Galleries, New York, 1945. Catalog published.

1947 Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York, 1947.*

School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1947.*

1950 *Philip Guston*, The University Gallery, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1950. Catalog published.

1951 *Painting 1948–1951 by Philip Guston*, Peridot Gallery, New York, 1951. Catalog published.*

1953 Egan Gallery, New York, 1953.*

1956 *Recent Paintings by Philip Guston*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1956.

1958 *Philip Guston*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1958.

1959 *V Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil, 1959. Catalog published. The United States section organized by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota: catalog published under the title, *A V Bienal, Estados Unidos*, 1959. Guston was represented in this exhibition by thirty-three paintings and drawings, surveying the years 1949–1958.

29 Recent Paintings by Philip Guston, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1959. Catalog published.

1961 *New Paintings by Philip Guston*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1961.

Philip Guston, Franz Kline, Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1961. Catalog published.

1962 *Philip Guston*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1962. Catalog published; also shown at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Belgium; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1963; and the Los Angeles County Museum, 1963.

1966 *Philip Guston, A Selective Retrospective Exhibition: 1945–1965*, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1966. Catalog published. Article by William Seitz.

Philip Guston, Recent Paintings and Drawings, The Jewish Museum, New York, 1966. Catalog published.

1967 *Philip Guston*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California, 1967. Catalog published.

1969 *Philip Guston*, Jefferson Gallery, Los Angeles, 1969.

Philip Guston, Paintings and Drawings, Gertrude Kasle Gallery, Detroit, Michigan, 1969. Catalog published.

1970 *New Paintings, Philip Guston*, School of Fine & Applied Arts Gallery, Boston University, 1970.

Philip Guston, Recent Paintings, Marlborough Gallery, New York, 1970. Catalog published.

1971 *Philip Guston, Recent Work*, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, California, 1971. Catalog published; organized with the cooperation of Marlborough Gallery, New York.

1973 *Philip Guston Drawings 1938–1972*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1973.

Philip Guston, Major Paintings of the Sixties, Gertrude Kasle Gallery, Detroit, Michigan, 1973. Catalog published.

1974 *Philip Guston*, David McKee Gallery, New York, 1974. Catalog published.

Philip Guston, Gertrude Kasle Gallery, Detroit, Michigan, 1974.

Philip Guston, New Paintings, School of Fine & Applied Arts Gallery, Boston University, 1974. Catalog published. Article by Dore Ashton.

1975 *Philip Guston*, Makler Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1975.

Philip Guston: Drawings for Bill Berkson's "Enigma Variations," Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, 1975.

1976 *Philip Guston, Paintings 1975*, David McKee Gallery, New York, 1976. Catalog published.

1977 *Philip Guston, Paintings 1976*, David McKee Gallery, New York, 1977. Catalog published.

A Selection of Recent Works by Philip Guston, Achim Moeller Ltd., London, 1977.

1978 *Philip Guston, Drawings 1947–1977*, David McKee Gallery, New York, 1978. Catalog published.

Philip Guston, Major Paintings 1975–76, Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago, 1978. Catalog published.

Philip Guston: New Works in San Francisco, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1978.

1979 *David McKee presents works on paper by Franz Kline and Philip Guston*, Asher/Faure, Los Angeles, 1979.

Philip Guston/Paintings 1978–1979, David McKee Gallery, New York, 1979. Catalog published.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1933 *Fourteenth Annual Exhibition of Painters and Sculptors*, Los Angeles Museum, 1933. Catalog published.

1934 *Fifteenth Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture*, Los Angeles Museum, 1934. Catalog published.

Progressive Painters of Southern California, Los Angeles Museum, 1934. Catalog published.

1938 *Murals for the Community*, Federal Art Gallery, New York, 1938.

1938 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1938. Catalog published.

1939 *American Art Today*, New York World's Fair, 1939. Catalog and checklist separately published.

Frontiers of American Art, Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, 1939. Catalog published.

Southern California Art Project, Los Angeles Museum, 1939. Catalog published.

1940 *Loan Exhibition of Mural Designs for Federal Buildings from the Section of Fine Arts Public Buildings Administration Federal Works Agency*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1940. Catalog published.

National Society of Mural Painters, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1940. Catalog published.

1940 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1940. Catalog published.

1941 *Directions in American Painting*, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1941. Catalog published.

1942 *The Fifty-Third Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture*, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1942. Catalog published.

1942–43 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Art, Sculpture, Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings and Prints, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1942. Catalog published.

The Third Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, 1942. Catalog published.

1943 *The Eighteenth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings*, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., 1943. Catalog published.

The Fifty-Fourth Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture, The Art Institue of Chicago, 1943. Catalog published.

1943–44 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Art, Sculpture, Paintings, Watercolors, and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1943. Catalog published.

Painting in the United States, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1943. Catalog published.

Small Paintings for the Home, Midtown Galleries, New York, 1943.

1944 *The Fifty-Fifth Annual American Exhibition: Water Colors and Drawings*, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1944. Catalog published.

1944 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1944. Catalog published.

110 American Painters of Today, The Second Annual Purchase Exhibition, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1944. Catalog published.

The One Hundred and Thirty-Ninth Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, 1944. Catalog published.

Painting in the United States, 1944, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1944. Catalog published.

1945 *Critics' Choice of the Contemporary Arts & Antiques Show*, 17th Armory, New York, 1945. *

The Fifty-Sixth Annual American Exhibition of Paintings, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1945. Catalog published.

First Summer Exhibition of Contemporary Art, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1945. Catalog published.

1945 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1945. Catalog published.

The Nineteenth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., 1945. Catalog published.

Painting in the United States, 1945, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1945. Catalog published.

1946 *American Painting, 39th Annual Exhibition*, City Art Museum of St. Louis, Missouri, 1946. Catalog published as the Museum's *Bulletin*, vol. 21: 1.

The Fifth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings 1946, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, 1946. Catalog published.

The Fifty-Seventh Annual American Exhibition, Water Colors and Drawings, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1946. Catalog published.

New Accessions U.S.A., Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado, 1946. Catalog published.

Paintings of the Year, Pepsi-Cola Company's Third Annual Exhibition, National Academy of Design, New York, 1946. Catalog published.

Twelve Americans, The Institute of Modern Art, Boston, 1946. Catalog published.

200 Years of American Painting, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Texas, 1946. Catalog published.

1947 *The Forty-Fifth Annual Philadelphia Water Color and Print Exhibition, and the Forty-Sixth Annual Exhibition of Miniatures*, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, 1947. Catalog published.

1947 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1947. Catalog published.

121st Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Sculpture, Water Color and Graphic Art, National Academy Galleries, National Academy of Design, New York, 1947. Catalog published.

Painting in the United States, 1947, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1947. Catalog published.

1948 *Exhibition of Work by Newly Elected Members, Recipients of Academy and Institute Honors And Pictures Purchased from the Childe Hassam Fund*, Art Gallery, The American Academy of Arts and Letters, and The National Institute of Arts and Letters, New York, 1948. Catalog published.

19th and 20th century European and American Art, Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, 1948. Catalog published.

Painting in the United States, 1948, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1948. Catalog published.

The Sixth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings, The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, 1948. Catalog published.

University of Illinois Competitive Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1948. Catalog published.

1949 *The Hallmark Art Award*, organized by Hall Brothers, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri, 1949. Catalog published; circulated to institutions in the United States.

Painting in the United States, 1949, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1949. Catalog published.

The Twenty-First Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., 1949. Catalog published.

University of Illinois Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1949. Catalog published.

1950 *Contemporary American Painting, 5th Biennial Purchase Exhibition*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1950. Catalog published.

1950 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1950. Catalog published.

The Pittsburgh International Exhibition of Paintings, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1950. Catalog published.

1951 *Abstract Painting and Sculpture in America*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1951. Catalog published.

American Vanguard Art for Paris Exhibition, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1951. Also shown at Galerie de France, Paris, 1952, under the title, *Regards sur la Peinture Americaine:* catalog published.

An Exhibition of Contemporary Art, University of Arkansas Art Center, Fayetteville, 1951. Catalog published.

Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, Ninth Street Gallery, New York, 1951. Catalog published. *

40 American Painters, 1940–1950, The University Gallery, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1951. Catalog published.

1951 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1951. Catalog published.

Thirty Contemporary Paintings, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1951.

1952 *Expressionism in American Painting*, Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, 1952. Catalog published. *

1952 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1952. Catalog published.

1953 *Abstract Expressionists*, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland, 1953. Catalog published.

1953 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1953. Catalog published.

1953 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1953. Catalog published.

1954 *Younger American Painters*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1954. Catalog published.

1955 *Annual Exhibition, Paintings, Sculpture, Watercolors, Drawings*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1955. Catalog published.

50 ans d'Art aux Etats-Unis, Collections du Museum of Modern Art de New York, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1955. Catalog published. Coordinated by the International Program of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; selections from this exhibition were shown in Barcelona, Spain; London; and The Hague, The Netherlands: catalogs published for each showing.

Communicating Art from Midwest Collections, American and European Paintings and Sculpture 1835–1955, Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, 1955. Catalog published.

Italy Rediscovered, An exhibition of work by American painters in Italy since World War II, Art Gallery, Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York, 1955. Catalog published.

The 1955 Pittsburgh International Exhibition of Contemporary Painting, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1955. Catalog published.

The Twenty-Fourth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., 1955. Catalog published; also shown at The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

World at Work, 1930–1955, An exhibition of paintings and drawings commissioned by Fortune, *presented on the occasion of the magazine's twenty-fifth anniversary*, sponsored by The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1955. Catalog published by Time, Inc.; circulated to ten museums in the United States.

1956 *Annual Exhibition, Sculpture, Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1956. Catalog published.

New Accessions USA, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado, 1956. Catalog published.

1956 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1956. Catalog published.

Recent Paintings by 7 *Americans*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1956.

12 Americans, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1956. Catalog published.

1957 *American Paintings, 1945–1957*, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota, 1957. Catalog published.

L'Aventure Informelle, Osaka, Japan, 1957. *

Children of the City, organized by The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1957. Circulated in the United States.

Contemporary Art-Acquisitions 1954 – 1957, The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, 1957. Catalog published.

IV Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna, de São Paulo, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil, 1957. Catalog published. The United States section organized under the auspices of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York: catalog published under the title, *Estados Unidos, IV Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo*.

8 Americans, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1957. Catalog published.

1957 Annual Exhibition, Sculpture, Painting, Watercolors, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1957. Catalog published.

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An Exhibition in Tribute to Sidney Janis, Hetzel Union Gallery, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, 1958. Catalog published.

50th Anniversary Exhibition, The Saint Louis Artists' Guild, Missouri, 1958. Catalog published.

The Museum and Its Friends, Twentieth-Century American Art from Collections of the Friends of the Whitney Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1958. Catalog published.

Nature in Abstraction, The Relation of Abstract Painting and Sculpture to Nature in Twentieth-Century American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1958. Catalog published; circulated to six museums in the United States.

The New American Painting, organized under the auspices of the International Council at The

Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1958. Circulated to eight European countries: catalogs published for each subsequent showing with title variations. Also shown at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1959, under the title, *The New American Painting, As Shown in Eight European Countries 1958–1959:* catalog reprinted with the addition of color plates and a report on the exhibition's reception abroad.

The 1958 Pittsburgh Bicentennial International Exhibition of Contemporary Painting and Sculpture, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1958. Catalog published.

Primera Bienal Interamericana de Pintura y Grabado, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, Mexico City, 1958. Catalog published. *

10th Anniversary Exhibition: X Years of Janis, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1958. Catalog published.

1959 *Amerikanskaya zhivopia i sculptura: Amerikanskaya natsionalonaya vystavka v Moskve*, Sokolniki Park, Moscow, U.S.S.R., 1959. Catalog published; organized for the United States Information Agency by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and subsequently shown there: catalog published under the title, *Paintings and Sculpture from the National Exhibition in Moscow.*

8 American Painters, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1959. Catalog published.

Eighteen American Artists, sponsored by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1959. Catalog published; shown in Israel at the Bezalel National Museum, Jerusalem; Tel Aviv Museum; and the Museum of Modern Art, Haifa.

The Museum and Its Friends, Eighteen Living American Artists Selected by the Friends of the Whitney Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1959. Catalog published.

63rd American Exhibition, Paintings, Sculpture, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1959. Catalog published.

II. Documenta '59, Kunst Nach 1945, Kassel, Germany, 1959. Catalog published by M. DuMont Schauberg, Cologne, Germany.

1960 *American Art 1910–1960*, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York, 1960. Catalog published.

Business Buys American Art, Third Loan Exhibition by the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1960. Catalog published.

Contemporary American Painting, The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, Ohio, 1960. Catalog published.

The Image Lost and Found, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Massachusetts, 1960. Catalog published.

Modern American Painting. See *25 Anni di Pittura Americana 1933–1958*, 1960.

9 American Painters, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1960. Catalog published.

60 American Painters: 1960, Abstract Expressionist Painting of the Sixties, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1960. Catalog published.

Small Masterpieces, Trabia Gallery, New York, 1960.

XXX Biennale Internazionale d'Arte, Venice, Italy, 1960. Catalog published. The United States section organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland: catalog published under the title, *Quattro Artisti Americani, Guston, Hofmann, Kline, Roszak.*

Undici Americani, Galleria dell'Ariete, Milan, Italy, 1960. Catalog published.

25 Anni di Pittura Americana 1933–1958, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy, 1960. Catalog published. Organized by the City Art Museum of St. Louis, Missouri, for the United States Information Agency, 1959. Also shown in Germany, Sweden, and England: catalogs published for each showing.

1961 *American Abstract Expressionists and Imagists*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1961. Catalog published.

American Business and the Arts, San Francisco Museum of Art, 1961. Catalog published.

American Vanguard, organized by the United States Information Agency, 1961. Catalog published; circulated to Austria, England, and Yugoslavia. *

Annual Exhibition 1961, Contemporary American Painting, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1961. Catalog published.

The Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Heller, organized by the Department of Circulating Exhibitions of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1961. Catalog published.

Contemporary Paintings Selected from 1960–1961 New York Gallery Exhibitions, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, 1961. Catalog published.

Dedication Exhibition, Krannert Art Museum, Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1961. Catalog published.

The Face of the Fifties, Recent Painting and Sculpture from the Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, 1961. Catalog published.

Modern American Drawings, organized under the auspices of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1961. Cir-

culated to Europe and Israel: catalogs published for each showing.

One Hundred Paintings from the G. David Thompson Collection, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1961. Catalog published; also shown at three museums in Europe.

The Sidney Janis Painters, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida, 1961. Catalog published as the Museum's *Bulletin*, April 1961.

10 American Painters, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1961. Catalog published.

The Theatre Collects American Art, Fourth Loan Exhibition by the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1961. Catalog published.

1962 *Abstract Drawings and Watercolors, U.S.A.*, organized under the auspices of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1962. Circulated in Latin America: catalogs published.

Abstrakte amerikanische Malerei, Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt, Germany, 1962. Catalog published.

Annual Exhibition 1962, Contemporary Sculpture and Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1962. Catalog published.

Art Since 1950, American and International, Seattle World's Fair, Washington, 1962. Catalog published. The American section was organized by and subsequently shown at the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston: catalog reprinted under the title, *American Art Since 1950*.

Contemporary American Painting, Selections from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Roy T. Neuberger, The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, 1962. Catalog published.

Continuity and Change, 45 American Abstract Painters and Sculptors, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut, 1962. Catalog published.

The First Five Years, Acquisitions by the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 1957 – 1962, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1962. Catalog published.

Selections from the Collection of Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York, 1962.

10 American Painters, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1962. Catalog published.

1963 *Annual Exhibition 1963, Contemporary American Painting*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1963. Catalog published.

Art USA Now, organized by Lee Nordness for S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc., Racine, Wisconsin, 1963. Circulated internationally. See also *Art USA Now*. Lee Nordness, ed. New York: The Viking Press, 1963.

11 Abstract Expressionist Painters, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1963. Catalog published.

Guggenheim International Award, 1964, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1963. Catalog published; also shown in Hawaii, West Germany, Canada, Argentina, and Florida.

Masters of the New York School, B. C. Holland, Inc., Chicago, 1963.

New Directions in American Painting, organized by The Poses Institute of Fine Arts, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1963. Catalog published; circulated to seven museums in the United States; Guston's work shown only at Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York.

Paintings from The Museum of Modern Art, New York, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., 1963. Catalog published.

60 Years of American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1963.

20th Century Master Drawings, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1963. Catalog published; also shown at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The United States Government Art Projects: Some Distinguished Alumni, organized by the Department of Circulating Exhibitions of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1963. Mimeographed summary distributed; circulated in the United States.

1964 *American Drawings*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1964. Catalog published.

American Painting 1910 to 1960: A Special Exhibition Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Association of College Unions, Fine Arts Gallery, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1964. Catalog published.

American Vision, Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York, 1964.

Between The Fairs, 25 Years of American Art, 1939–1964, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1964. Catalog published.

Boston Collects Modern Art, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1964. Catalog published.

1. Internationale der Zeichnung, Mathildenhöhe,

Darmstadt, Germany, 1964. Catalog published.

The 1964 Pittsburgh International Exhibition of Contemporary Painting and Sculpture, Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1964. Catalog published.

Painting and Sculpture of a Decade: 54 – 64, The Tate Gallery, London, 1964. Catalog published.

Recent American Paintings, Art Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, 1964. Catalog published.

A Selection of 20th Century Art of 3 Generations, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1964. Catalog published.

XXXII Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d'Arte, Venice, Italy, 1964. Catalog published; Guston included in the section "Arte d'oggi dei musei," organized by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

2 Generations: Picasso to Pollock, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1964. Catalog published.

Van Gogh and Expressionism, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1964. Catalog published.

1965 *About New York, Night and Day 1915 – 1965*, The Gallery of Modern Art, New York, 1965. Catalog published by The Women's City Club of New York.

Colorists 1950 – 1965, San Francisco Museum of Art, 1965. Catalog published.

A Decade of American Drawings, 1955 – 1965, 8th Exhibition Sponsored by the Friends, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1965. Catalog published.

New Accessions, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1965. Catalog published.

New York School, The First Generation, Paintings of the 1940s and 1950s, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1965. Catalog published.

Paintings from the Collection of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1965. Catalog published.

Twelfth Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting and Sculpture, Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign, 1965. Catalog published.

Virginia Dwan Collection, UCLA Art Galleries, University of California, Los Angeles, 1965. Catalog published.

1966 *Abstract Expressionism — A Continuing Tradition, Philip Guston, Conrad Marca-Relli, Adolph Gottlieb, Robert Motherwell*, J. L. Hudson Gallery, Detroit, Michigan, 1966. Catalog published.

Art of the United States: 1670 – 1966, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1966. Catalog published.

Contemporary Americans, The Winnipeg Art Gallery, Canada, 1966. Catalog published.

Drawing &, Art Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, 1966. Catalog published.*

Fifty Years of Modern Art 1916 – 1966, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio, 1966. Catalog published.

The First Flint Invitational, An Exhibition of Contemporary Paint and Sculpture, Flint Institute of Arts, Michigan, 1966. Catalog published.

Six Artists in Sarasota, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida, 1966. Catalog published.

Two Decades of American Painting, organized under the auspices of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1966. Circulated to Japan, India, and Australia: catalog published.

1967 *American Painting: the 1940's*, University of Georgia, Athens, sponsored by The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1967. Catalog published; circulating exhibition.

Contemporary American Painting and Sculpture 1967, Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign, 1967. Catalog published.

Selection 1967: Recent Acquisitions in Modern Art, University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1967. Catalog published.

Six Painters, Mondrian, Guston, Kline, de Kooning, Pollock, Rothko, University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas, 1967. Catalog published.

Three Artists of Today, Philip Guston, Conrad Marca-Relli, James Rosati, Colby College Art Museum, Waterville, Maine, 1967. Catalog published.

1968 *An American Collection, The Neuberger Collection*, National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., 1968. Catalog published; selections shown at the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, and Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.

Drawings USA, Saint Paul Art Center, Minnesota, 1968. Catalog published.

Graphics 69, University of Kentucky Art Gallery, Lexington, 1968. Catalog published.

Painting as Painting, Art Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, 1968. Catalog published.

Paintings from the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1968. Catalog published by The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy.

Selections from the Collection of the Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign, The

Arts Club of Chicago, 1968. Catalog published.

Social Comment in America, organized by the Department of Circulating Exhibitions of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1968. Catalog published.

1969 *109 obras de Albright-Knox Art Gallery*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1969. Catalog published.

The New American Painting and Sculpture: The First Generation from the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1969. Catalog published.

New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940–1970, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1969. Catalog published.

1970 National Drawing Exhibition, San Francisco Museum of Art in cooperation with the San Francisco Women Artists, 1969. Catalog published.

Painting and Sculpture Today—1969, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana, 1969. Catalog published as the Museum's *Bulletin*, vol. 55: 3.

Paintings from the Guggenheim Museum, A Loan Exhibition of Modern Paintings Covering the Period 1949 – 1965, from The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio, 1969. Catalog published.

Selected Sculpture and Works on Paper, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1969. Catalog published.

Tamarind: Homage to Lithography, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1969. Catalog published; also shown at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Twentieth-Century Art from the Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1969. Catalog published.

1970 *American Artists of the Nineteen-Sixties*, School of Fine & Applied Arts Gallery, Boston University, 1970. Catalog published.

Arte Negli Stati Uniti dal 1940 al 1970, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Florence, Italy, 1970. Catalog published.

L'Art vivant aux Etats-Unis, Fondation Maeght, St. Paul de Vence, France, 1970. Catalog published.

Color and Field 1890 – 1970, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, 1970. Catalog published; also shown at the Dayton Art Institute, Ohio, and the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio.

Selections from the Guggenheim Museum Collection 1900–1970, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1970. Catalog published.

The Thomas Edward Benesch Memorial Collection, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland, 1970. Catalog published as the Museum's *Record*, vol. 1: 2.

1971 *American Paintings and Sculpture: 1948–1969*, Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign, 1971. Catalog published.

Drawings in Saint Paul from the Permanent Collection of the Minnesota Museum of Art, Minnesota Museum of Art, Saint Paul, 1971. Catalog published.

1972 *Exhibition of work by Newly Elected Members and Recipients of Honors and Awards*, Art Gallery and Museum, The American Academy of Arts and Letters, and The National Institute of Arts and Letters, New York, 1972. Catalog published.

Immagine per la Cittá, Palazzo dell' Accademia, Genoa, Italy, 1972. Catalog published.

1973 *American Art at Mid-Century 1*, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1973. Catalog published.

Visual R & D: A Corporation Collects, The CIBA-GEIGY Collection of Contemporary Paintings, Art Museum, The University of Texas at Austin, 1973. Catalog published.

1974 *American Works on Paper, 1944 to 1974*, William Zierler, Inc., New York, 1974. Catalog published.

Color in Art, A Tribute to Arthur Pope, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1974. Catalog published.*

Works on Paper, from the CIBA-GEIGY Collection, Summit Art Center, Summit, New Jersey, 1974. Catalog published.

1975 *Drawings by Five Abstract Expressionist Painters: Arshile Gorky, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, Philip Guston*, Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, 1975. Catalog published; revised version shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1976: catalog published.

The Kennedy Galleries are Host to the Hundredth Anniversary Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture by 100 Artists Associated with the Art Students League of New York, Kennedy Galleries, New York, 1975. Catalog published.

1976 *Acquisition Priorities: Aspects of Postwar Painting in America*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1976. Catalog published.

American Master Drawings and Watercolors, organized by The American Federation of Arts, New York; shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1976. Checklist printed.

New Deal Art: California, de Saisset Art Gallery and Museum, University of Santa Clara, California, 1976. Catalog published.

A Selection of American Art: The Skowhegan School 1946–1976, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 1976. Catalog published; also shown at the Colby Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine.

The Yale Art Students' Choice: 76–77, Art and Architecture Gallery, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, 1976.

1977 *American Drawing 1927–1977*, Minnesota Museum of Art, Saint Paul, 1977. Catalog published.

Permanent Collection: 30 Years of American Art, 1945–1975, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1977.

Woodstock: An American Art Colony 1902 – 1977, Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1977. Catalog published.

Works on Paper 1900–1960 From Southern California Collections, Montgomery Art Gallery, Pomona College, Claremont, California, 1977. Catalog published; also shown at The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco: M. H. de Young Memorial Museum.

1978 *American Painting of the 1970s*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, 1978. Catalog published; circulated to five museums in the United States.

Art for the People—New Deal Murals on Long Island, The Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island, New York, 1978. Catalog published.

European and American Drawings, Selections from Joslyn Art Museum, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, 1978. Catalog published.

New England Connections, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 1978. Checklist printed.

1979 *American Paintings 1900–1970: The James A. Michener Collection*, Amarillo Art Center, Texas, 1979.

Art Inc., American Paintings from Corporate Collections, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Alabama, 1979. Catalog published; also shown at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Indiana; and the San Diego Museum of Art, California.

Das Museum of Modern Art New York zu Gast im Kunstmuseum Bern und Museum Ludwig Köln, coordinated by the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1979. Catalog published; shown at Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland, and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany.

Master Drawings and Watercolors of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland, and The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1979. Catalog published; circulated to five museums in the United States.

New Painting/New York, Jake Berthot, Ross Bleckner, Alan Cote, Philip Guston, Elizabeth Murray, Jerry Zenuik, Joseph Zuckern Arts Council of Great Britain, Hayward Gallery, London, 1979. Catalog published.

1979 Biennial Exhibition, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1979. Catalog published.

Poets and Painters, The Denver Art Museum, Colorado, 1979. Catalog published; circulated to the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, California, and the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery and Mary Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compiled by Eugenie Candau

An extensive bibliography on Philip Guston appeared in *Philip Guston*, S. G. Guggenheim Museum, 1962. It was supplemented by Lucy Lippard's documentation in *New York School: The First Generation*, published as an exhibition catalog in 1965 by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and reissued in revised book form by the New York Graphic Society in 1971. Dore Ashton's 1976 monograph, *Yes, But . . .*, includes a useful bibliographic summary of the artist's career to 1974.

The following bibliography is based on these and on additional information provided by the artist. The first section lists monographs and the catalogs of one-man exhibitions in chronological order. Catalogs of group exhibitions have been omitted; citations for these are included in the Biography of Exhibitions found elsewhere in this book. The second section is an alphabetical listing of general works, and the third presents articles and reviews listed alphabetically within a chronological framework. Only published material is included and may be found, with some exceptions, in the Louise Sloss Ackerman Fine Arts Library of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. An asterisk preceding an item indicates that it was not available for examination by the compiler.

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FILM

Philip Guston, New York: Blackwood Films, 1971. Twenty-eight minute color film, narrated by Guston; an expanded, fifty-three minute version is projected for distribution in Autumn 1980.

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Will Brown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 25

David McKee Gallery, New York: 66

M. Lee Fatherree, Berkeley, California: 13, 19, 26, 39, 61

Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts: 29

Philip Guston, Woodstock, New York: figs. 2, 3; 9, 12, 33, 35; 31 (photo: Oliver Baker, New York); 30 (photo: Peter A. Juley and Son, New York); 41, 50, 54 (photo: Eric Pollitzer, New York)

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: fig. 6; 36

The Museum of Modern Art, New York: 24

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Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis, Missouri: 7, 28

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"I think the original problems, that were posed after the war period (World War II) in painting, were the most, to my way of thinking, the most revolutionary problems posed and still are . . . The original revolutionary impulse behind the New York School was a feeling that you were driven into a corner against the wall with no place to stand, just the place you occupied, as if the act of painting itself was not making a picture. It was as if you had to prove to yourself that truly the act of creation was still possible. Whether it was just possible. It felt to me as if you were on trial. I'm speaking very subjectively. I felt as if I were talking to myself, having a dialectical monologue with myself to see if I could create. . .

I'm puzzled all the time by representation or not, the literal image and the nonobjective. There's no such thing as nonobjective art. Everything has an object, has a figure. The question is what kind? Does it have illusions? In what way can you have figurations? I had to rediscover again and again that, I guess, I'm not really interested in painting; I'm not interested in making a picture. Then what the hell am I interested in? I must be interested in the process I am talking about. . . . I'm painting and I look down at this stuff, and it's just inert *matter*, inert paint. Then what is it? I look back at the canvas, and it's not inert, it's active, moving, living. And that seems to me like some kind of peculiar miracle that I need to have again and again. Why I need this kind of miracle, I don't know, but I need it. My conviction is that this is the act of creation to me.

Philip Guston

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